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NEARBY

'No business or any other links with DKS'

DHARMASTHALA
Denying business or any other links with Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, BJP State unit president B.Y. Vijayendra has said that his own party colleagues have spread "false information". » PAGE 8

Safaris to resume in Bandipur, Nagarahole

BENGALURU
The Karnataka Government on Friday announced the full restoration of the jungle safari (park excursion) at the Bandipur and Nagarahole Tiger Reserves. » PAGE 8

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Ayodhya fund case: all eight accused in judicial custody

Around ₹80 lakh recovered from those arrested, says prosecution officer; close aides of the Ram Temple Trust chief, Champat Rai, among those held; VHP denies reports of the chief resigning

Mayank Kumar
LUCKNOW

The eight people named as the accused in a first information report (FIR) regarding the alleged embezzlement of donations received at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya have been arrested and sent to judicial custody until Monday.

"The eight accused will be produced before the Special Court dealing with corruption-related matters on Monday. A total of ₹79.85 lakh has been recovered from them," prosecution officer K.C. Verma told journalists outside the court in Ayodhya on Friday, where heavy police security was deployed.

The accused include close aides of Champat Rai, general secretary of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust, who is said to have resigned from the post. However, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) social media head, Rakesh Pandey, denied such reports as fake news.

The accused – Lavkush Mishra, Anukalp Mishra, Manish Yadav, Ramashankar Yadav alias Tinnu, Subhash Srivastava, Avinash Shukla, Rama Shankar Mishra, and Karunesh Pandey – have been booked on charges including theft, criminal breach of trust, cheating, and criminal conspiracy. "At the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, devotees deposited money in the donation boxes. The money was allegedly stolen by employees of the trust," the prosecution officer said. As per the FIR, the accused were responsible for counting the cash and valuables donated by devotees at the temple.

Champat Rai, chief of the temple trust, during the construction of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya in January 2023. SANDEEP SAXENA

CONTINUED ON
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AT THE CENTRE OF THE ROW
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Cong. demands SC-monitored investigation

NEW DELHI
The Congress on Friday demanded a Supreme Court-monitored investigation into the allegations of the embezzlement of donations at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya and called for immediate disbandment of the current temple trust. » PAGE 13

Govt. releases names of 6 personnel killed in Operation Sindoor

Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

In the first official disclosure of military casualties from Operation Sindoor, the Centre on Friday published the names of six armed forces personnel who laid down their lives during the cross-border operation in May 2025.

The names of the six personnel, five from the Indian Army and one from the Indian Air Force, have been included in the Roll of Honour on the National War Memorial website.

The fallen personnel are: Subedar Major Pawan Kumar of Headquarters 10 Infantry Brigade; Rifleman Sunil Kumar, Vir Chakra, of 4 Jammu and Kashmir Light Infantry; Lance Naik Dinesh Kumar of 5 Field Regiment; Agniveer Mood Muralinaik of 851 Light Regiment; Havildar Sunil Kumar Singh of 237 Field Workshop Company; and Sergeant Surendra Kumar, Vayu Medal, of 39 Wing.

The names of the six men were released with the annual list of troops killed during various military operations in 2025. Their names will be inscribed on the Tyag Chakra (Circle of Sacrifice) at the National War Memorial in New Delhi.

Fallen heroes

The six personnel who laid down their lives during the cross-border operation in May 2025:

- Subedar Major Pawan Kumar
- Rifleman Sunil Kumar, Vir Chakra
- Lance Naik Dinesh Kumar
- Agniveer Mood Muralinaik
- Havildar Sunil Kumar Singh
- Sergeant Surendra Kumar, Vayu Sena Medal

CONG. SLAMS DELAY
» PAGE 13

Biker critical after tree branch falls on his head

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 52-year-old motorcyclist suffered critical head injuries after a dry tree branch fell on him while he was riding along Ram Mandir Road in Rajajinagar on Wednesday evening.

The incident was captured on CCTV. The victim, identified as Satish, was on his way for finance collection work when a dry branch from a roadside tree fell on his head. The impact caused him to lose control of the vehicle and crash onto the road.

Local residents immediately rushed him to a nearby hospital. He was later shifted to a private hospital in Yeshwantpur. Doctors performed emergency brain surgery and informed the family that the first 48 hours are critical.

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Upstaged, but not unseated — yet: George Russell's succession struggle

GETTY IMAGES

The British driver has long been viewed as a potential F1 champion — and in a title-contending Mercedes, he thought his moment had arrived. But over the first seven races, he has been outshone by a challenger to his status as team leader: teen sensation Andrea Kimi Antonelli

S. Dipak Ragav

Since time immemorial, one of the key conflicts humanity has faced is the battle for succession. It can play out within kingdoms, corporate boardrooms and families. Sport is no exception to this phenomenon.

Generational showdowns

Across various sports, generational showdowns have produced countless iconic moments, which have emerged from interesting narrative arcs. Sometimes the presumptive successor takes over; sometimes a disruptor challenges the natural line of succession.

In the world of Formula One, Mercedes driver George Russell is currently involved in one such fight.

The British driver, who made his F1 debut in 2019, was marked out for great things at a young age. He won nearly every major category leading up to F1, with titles in F4, GP3 and F2.

His big moment came when he subbed for Lewis Hamilton in Bahrain in 2020 and was immediately faster than the other Mercedes driver, Valtteri Bottas. In 2022, Russell got his dream gig when he was selected to partner seven-time champion Hamilton at the Silver Arrows.

However, Mercedes, which had won the constructors' title from 2014 to 2021, was dislodged from its perch in the sport's ground-effect era (2022 to 2025) by Red Bull and then McLaren.

Russell can take a lesson from Norris' title-winning run last year, in which the latter was behind McLaren teammate Oscar Piastri until late in the season before turning the tables

It meant Russell never had a chance to fight for the title and had to settle for the odd win on days when the Mercedes found its sweet spot in certain conditions and on specific track layouts.

But in the first three years, the 28-year-old did have the opportunity to go toe-to-toe with the sport's most successful driver in Hamilton. It was here that Russell proved his worth as a potential champion, getting the better of his illustrious teammate in two out of their three seasons together. In 2024, Russell out-qualified Hamilton 19-5, underlining his searing pace.

After Hamilton joined Ferrari in 2025, Russell became the natural team leader. So when Mercedes hit the ground running this season under F1's new rules, which introduced a novel engine concept with increased electrification, the expectation was that Russell would lead the team's title charge.

And it appeared everything was falling into place for Russell after the first race in Melbourne, which he dominated from pole. However, since then, things haven't gone to plan for the Briton, who has seen a challenge emerge from the other side of his garage.

Andrea Kimi Antonelli, who joined Mercedes last year, is viewed as a generational talent by team boss Toto Wolff, who backed the Italian to step into Hamilton's shoes at 18. In his rookie season, though, Antonelli had a baptism of fire in a tricky car and was comprehensively beaten.

Russell would have fancied his chances in a championship-winning car this season even as the teenager – highly rated as he may be – found his footing in the big league.

Unfortunately for Russell, he is staring at a situation he would seldom have imagined after the Australian GP.

Deep inside, Russell will have the unsettling feeling of knowing that the thing he has worked for all his life, which seemed near, is slipping away from him at a critical juncture

The early part of 2026 shows how much luck can influence matters, and how things can spiral out of control.

Russell is yet to step onto the top step of the podium after Melbourne, while his teammate went on a five-race winning streak. The result: Russell is now 50 points behind Antonelli and third in the standings behind even Hamilton, who won his first race for Ferrari in Barcelona.

Slippery slope

Things started going downhill for Russell in the second race in China where a technical issue compromised his qualifying. Though he recovered to qualify second, he got mugged at the start by the Ferraris and had to fight his way back to second, allowing his colleague to take his maiden win. In Japan, a Safety Car intervention led to him being jumped by Antonelli.

It was the start of a difficult run, and over the next three rounds, Russell was comprehensively beaten in two – Miami and Monaco – while in between, in Montreal, he suffered a costly retirement due to engine trouble.

Although Russell trimmed his deficit in Barcelona, finishing second while Antonelli retired, the way the weekend unfolded was a source of more concern. Russell had the measure of the 19-year-old for most of the weekend, but the Bologna native slowly kept improving. By the time Antonelli retired, he had surpassed Russell on track with a fine overtaking manoeuvre.

Russell's strength has been his one-lap pace, but so far this year, he trails 3-4 in qualifying. While a large part of the points difference is down to factors beyond his control, the recent dip in performance is the more alarming sign.

One reason the driver has identified is that his driving style is affecting the tyres.

"The difference is how we're driving has such an impact on the tyres. He's just getting the tyres in a nicer window than me, a nicer balance over the course of a lap, and the pace is just coming easier for him. I'm not sure why that is. I've been driving in this manner my whole career, and now, for whatever reason, it's not working with this car," Russell remarked recently.

He seemed perplexed that what worked in the first few rounds is now hurting him. At the same time, it could also be that he is over-driving to reassert his authority.

Known for his sophisticated and quintessentially British vocabulary, he has even resorted to mind games, tempering expectations by saying the title race is his rival's to lose despite nearly two-thirds of the season remaining.

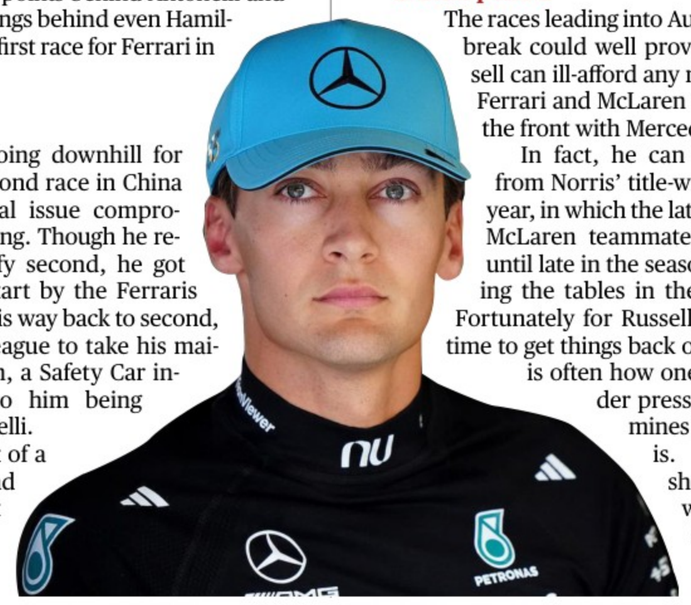
But deep inside, Russell will have the unsettling feeling of knowing that the thing he has worked for all his life, which seemed near, is slipping away from him at a critical juncture.

While he has experience on his side, it is no secret that over the last two years, his drive has been under threat from Max Verstappen, whom Wolff has courted for over a decade. In fact, the idea of promoting Kimi very early was driven by the fact that the Mercedes boss did not want to repeat the mistake he made by failing to sign Verstappen straightaway in 2014.

Considering his compatriot Lando Norris, whom he beat for the F2 title in 2018, is already a world champion, Russell would want to make full use of this opportunity. In F1, you never know when the next chance will present itself.

Crucial period

The races leading into August's summer break could well prove crucial. Russell can ill-afford any more slips with Ferrari and McLaren mixing it up at the front with Mercedes.



In fact, he can take a lesson from Norris' title-winning run last year, in which the latter was behind McLaren teammate Oscar Piastri until late in the season before turning the tables in the final stretch. Fortunately for Russell, he has more time to get things back on track. And it is often how one responds under pressure that determines how good one is. Can Russell show that he is a worthy successor to the line of Mercedes champions?

STACKING UP

ATP Men's Top 15

#	Player	Age	Points	Events
1	Jannik Sinner	24	13,450	18
2	Carlos Alcaraz	23	9,460	17
3	Alexander Zverev	29	7,190	20
4	Felix Auger-Aliassime	25	4,440	24
5	Ben Shelton	23	4,160	23
6	Alex de Minaur	27	4,110	24
7	Taylor Fritz	28	3,915	23
8	Novak Djokovic	39	3,760	16
9	Daniil Medvedev	30	3,580	24
10	Flavio Cobolli	24	3,460	27
11	Alexander Bublik	29	2,620	26
12	Casper Ruud	27	2,425	22
13	Andrey Rublev	28	2,420	23
14	Jiri Lehecka	24	2,360	21
15	Lorenzo Musetti	24	2,325	22

Top Indians ▶

Sumit Nagal
Rank 285 ▼ 2 spots

Manas Dhamne
Rank 382 ▼ 4 spots

WTA Women's Top 15

#	Player	Age	Points	Events
1	Aryna Sabalenka	28	9,090	18
2	Elena Rybakina	27	8,143	22
3	Iga Swiatek	25	6,733	19
4	Jessica Pegula	32	6,380	20
5	Mirra Andreeva	19	5,751	20
6	Amanda Anisimova	24	5,523	15
7	Coco Gauff	22	4,879	18
8	Elina Svitolina	31	4,423	16
9	Victoria Mboko	19	3,670	22
10	Linda Noskova	21	3,489	22
11	Karolina Muchova	29	3,438	19
12	Belinda Bencic	29	3,385	19
13	Marta Kostyuk	23	3,157	18
14	Jasmine Paolini	30	2,617	19
15	Naomi Osaka	28	2,571	19

Top Indians ▶

Sahaja Yamalapalli
Rank 328 ▲ 4 spots

Vaishnavi Adkar
Rank 399 ▼ 3 spots

F1 Drivers' standings

#	Driver	Team	Points	Wins
1	A.K. Antonelli	Mercedes	156	5
2	L. Hamilton	Ferrari	115	1
3	G. Russell	Mercedes	106	1
4	C. Leclerc	Ferrari	75	0
5	L. Norris	McLaren	73	0
6	O. Piastri	McLaren	68	0
7	M. Verstappen	Red Bull	55	0
8	P. Gasly	Alpine	41	0
9	I. Hadjar	Red Bull	34	0
10	L. Lawson	RB	28	0
11	O. Bearman	Haas	18	0
12	F. Colapinto	Alpine	16	0
13	A. Lindblad	RB	13	0
14	C. Sainz	Williams	6	0
15	A. Albon	Williams	5	0
16	E. Ocon	Haas	3	0
17	G. Bortoleto	Audi	2	0
18	F. Alonso	Aston Martin	1	0
19	N. Hulkenberg	Audi	0	0
20	V. Bottas	Cadillac	0	0
21	S. Perez	Cadillac	0	0
22	L. Stroll	Aston Martin	0	0

A.K. Antonelli

L. Hamilton

F1 Constructors' standings

Pos	Team	Points	Wins
1	Mercedes	262	6
2	Ferrari	190	1
3	McLaren	141	0
4	Red Bull	89	0
5	Alpine	57	0
6	RB	41	0
7	Haas	21	0
8	Williams	11	0
9	Audi	2	0
10	Aston Martin	1	0
11	Cadillac	0	0

Badminton Men's ranking

#	Player	Points	Events
1	Shi Yu Qi	1,05,305	12
2	Kunlavut Vitidsarn	92,565	16
3	Anders Antonsen	91,155	17
4	Jonatan Christie	88,431	17
5	Christo Popov	84,682	20
6	Chou Tien Chen	80,280	27
7	Alex Lanier	74,525	17
8	Li Shi Feng	73,083	16
9	Victor Lai	72,915	21
10	Alwi Farhan	70,369	19
11	Kodai Naraoka	68,020	21
12	Lin Chun-Yi	66,594	18
13	Loh Kean Yew	65,700	18
14	Lakshya Sen	65,213	22
15	Weng Hong Yang	59,341	17

Top Indians ▶

Lakshya Sen
Rank 14

Ayush Shetty
Rank 21

Badminton Women's ranking

#	Player	Points	Events
1	An Se Young	1,17,787	16
2	Wang Zhi Yi	1,06,839	16
3	Akane Yamaguchi	1,00,426	18
4	Chen Yu Fei	87,651	15
5	Han Yue	82,288	14
6	Putri Kusuma Wardani	73,473	18
7	Ratchanok Intanon	72,246	20
8	Pornpawee Chochuwong	67,977	16
9	Tomoka Miyazaki	63,646	22
10	P.V. Sindhu	61,401	14
11	Nozomi Okuhara	59,060	19
12	Chiu Pin-Chian	57,498	24
13	Michelle Li	55,227	20
14	Kim Ga Eun	54,921	16
15	Mia Blichfeldt	53,503	15

Top Indians ▶

P.V. Sindhu
Rank 10

Unnati Hooda
Rank 24

Test Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Joe Root	871	932
2	Harry Brook	866	898
3	Travis Head	853	884
4	Steve Smith	831	947
5	Kamindu Mendis	781	784
6	Temba Bavuma	775	806
7	Shubman Gill	743	807
8	Yashasvi Jaiswal	733	858
9	Dinesh Chandimal	717	755
10	Rachin Ravindra	715	737

Test Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Jasprit Bumrah	870	908
1	Matt Henry	870	870
3	Mitchell Starc	838	852
4	Pat Cummins	832	914
5	Marco Jansen	825	825
6	Scott Boland	820	820
7	Noman Ali	817	853
8	Kagiso Rabada	807	902
9	Josh Hazlewood	775	864
10	Nathan Lyon	753	812

ODI Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Daryl Mitchell	815	840
2	Shubman Gill	791	841
3	Virat Kohli	768	908
4	Rohit Sharma	754	879
5	Ibrahim Zadran	712	756
6	Babar Azam	689	894
7	Shai Hope	683	782
8	Harry Tector	679	730
9	Charith Asalanka	659	705
10	Harry Brook	656	656

ODI Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Rashid Khan	682	775
2	Abrar Ahmed	675	675
3	Jofra Archer	649	682
4	Keshav Maharaj	645	737
5	Maheesh Theekshana	641	680
6	Adil Rashid	629	671
7	Kuldeep Yadav	614	757
8	Mehidy Hasan	604	722
8	Shaheen Afridi	604	691
10	Mitchell Santner	599	656

T20I Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Abhishek Sharma	875	931
2	Ishan Kishan	871	871
3	Sahibzada Farhan	848	848
4	Phil Salt	792	881
5	Pathum Nissanka	751	796
6	Tilak Varma	742	845
7	Suryakumar Yadav	722	912
8	Jos Buttler	716	794
9	Mitchell Marsh	706	706
10	Dewald Brevis	702	738

T20I Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Rashid Khan	753	828
2	Varun Chakaravarthy	740	818
3	Abrar Ahmed	736	757
4	Adil Rashid	721	747
5	Jasprit Bumrah	702	783
6	Adam Zampa	700	746
7	Nathan Ellis	675	678
8	Corbin Bosch	669	745
9	Wanindu Hasaranga	668	809
10	Mujeeb Ur Rahman	663	757

Towing operations prove costly for GBA

Each corporation is required to pay ₹12.54 lakh for a three-month period for two towing vehicles, which is about ₹2.09 lakh per vehicle per month

Rishita Khanna
BENGALURU

The revival of towing operations in Bengaluru is resulting in losses for the corporations, as the fixed payments made to private contractors are higher than the revenue being recovered through fines and towing charges.

Under the current agreement, each corporation is required to pay ₹12.54 lakh for a three-month period for two towing vehicles, which is about ₹2.09 lakh per vehicle per month. This amount must be paid to the vendors for towing the vehicles and the manpower, regardless of how many vehicles are towed. Of the total money recovered, the towing charges amount will go to the corporations, while the fines will go to the traffic police.

The Commissioners also anticipated another challenge, with bidders moving to corporations that pay more per vehicle. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Corporation-wise towing status

Fixed vendor payment- ₹12.54 lakh for three months (per corporation)

North corporation	West corporation	South corporation	East corporation
shortfall of ₹5.25 lakh	towing charges ₹11.62 lakh	yet to start operations	costs limited to manpower only

40% loss

For instance, in Bengaluru North, 858 abandoned vehicles – including 436 four-wheelers – were towed from April to June. However, only ₹7.29 lakh was received from the traffic department, compared to the ₹12.54 lakh to be paid to the vendor for the same period, resulting in a loss of around 40% for the corporation. North Corporation Commissioner Pomala Sunil Kumar said towing operations were initially delayed as the traffic police cited a lack of suitable land to park the seized vehicles. As a result, a two-acre site was later identified at Kogilu, and the land was handed over through a letter to the Deputy Commissioner on May 9. Despite this, the operations have not picked up pace. "Now, the previous tender has ended, and a fresh tender has been floated for the deployment of two towing vehicles for one year at an estimated cost of ₹60 lakh. The bids will be opened on July 1. However, the exercise is already becoming a burden for the corporation," Mr. Kumar said, adding that the challenges will be looked into in coordination with the city traffic police. The situation varies across corporations. In the South City Corporation, towing operations are yet to begin but are expected to start next Monday, according to Commissioner Ramesh K.N.

> Towing operations between April 3 and June 23 show that while more vehicles are being lifted every month, the money collected is still not enough to cover the payment for the service
>
> **RAJENDRA K.V.**
> Commissioner, West City Corporation

Less burden

In the East City Corporation, officials said the financial burden is minimal because towing vehicles were procured through CSR funds, and the corporation only bears manpower costs as per minimum wages. While the Central City Corporation Commissioner was not available for comment, West City Corporation Commissioner Rajendra K.V., while reflecting on a similar experience, said that the activity is expected to pick up. "Towing operations between April 3 and June 23 show that while more vehicles are being lifted every month, the money collected is still not enough to cover the payment for the service," Mr. Rajendra said.

The total revenue from towing exceeded ₹18 lakh, but only ₹11.62 lakh was received by the West City Corporation, and the rest was given to the traffic police. "All measures will be taken now to expand the collection," the Commissioner said.

The Commissioners also anticipated another challenge, with bidders moving to corporations that pay more per vehicle. Recently, the South City Corporation had agreed to pay over ₹3.5 lakh per vehicle while getting six vehicles. The remaining four corporations have bid below ₹2.5 lakh, with some bidding just ₹2 lakh. The Commissioners said that even at the current rate, the activity is becoming a loss, and if such an imbalance continues across corporations, bidders will move accordingly. They also argued that the traffic police have been giving multiple reasons to delay the activity, including a lack of land and delays in auctioning the vehicles.

Joint Commissioner (Traffic) Karthik Reddy, however, argued that each corporation has currently been provided two towing vehicles, except South Zone, which has six. He said the pilot was launched at a small scale, as this was the first coordinated towing operation between the traffic police and the GBA. "How many vehicles can be lifted with a single vehicle? One towing vehicle can handle up to 15 two-wheelers or five to eight four-wheelers a day, and the initial rollout was kept small before scaling up," he said.

Sources in the Traffic Police Department, however, said that the towing vehicles were frequently breaking down, and that staff from the vendor's side have not been turning up. The same has been communicated to the corporations by respective inspectors, they said.

No technical malfunction in the equipment was detected during a detailed inspection of the train and its door operating system.
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Commuter's metal chain disrupted metro service, states BMRCL

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A commuter's metal chain getting lodged in a train door guideway led to the disruption of Namma Metro service at Cubbon Park Metro Station on the Purple Line on June 25.

The Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) shared the findings of a preliminary investigation on Friday.

The incident, which occurred between 7.36 p.m. and 7.54 p.m., led to a temporary disruption of the metro services and resulted in overcrowding at several stations along the Purple Line during the evening peak hours.

The BMRCL said that the investigation conducted by its Operations and Maintenance teams revealed that the metal chain got stuck in the train door guideway, preventing the doors from closing properly. As a result, the train could not proceed until the obstruction was removed.

No technical malfunction in the equipment was detected during a detailed inspection of the train and its door operating system, ruling out mechanical failure as the cause of the disruption.

The clarification comes a day after the incident triggered concerns over the reliability of metro operations, especially in the wake of two service disruptions on the Purple Line in the past one week.

On June 23, a technical snag in a metro train crippled operations at the busy Cubbon Park Metro Station. The issue triggered widespread delays and confusion.

How reduced community participation is affecting Puttenahalli lake

Rishita Khanna
BENGALURU

What began as a citizen-led effort to restore and protect Puttenahalli Lake alongside the erstwhile Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) is now at the crossroads. Residents associated with the lake said the waterbody, which evolved into a vibrant community space over the years, is gradually slipping back towards the neglected condition it was in more than a decade ago.

Members of the Puttenahalli Neighbourhood Lake Improvement Trust (PNLIT), which has been involved with the lake since its rejuvenation in 2010, attribute the decline to the absence of a formal agreement with the civic authorities. While the trust continues to engage with the lake, members said they could no longer undertake many of the activities that were possible when an MoU with the BBMP was in place, limiting their role to programmes conducted during public visiting hours.

The Puttenahalli Neighbourhood Lake Improvement Trust, which has been involved with the lake since its rejuvenation in 2010, attributes the decline to the absence of a formal agreement with the civic authorities. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Arathi Manay, managing trustee of the PNLIT, said the MoU gave the trust the flexibility to undertake maintenance work, organise activities and respond to issues at short notice without having to seek permissions each time. It also provided the credibility required to approach organisations for funding support whenever projects required resources beyond what could be raised through neighbourhood donations, she said. Before the governance change, the PNLIT spent nearly ₹8 lakh annually on maintaining the lake. The trust had engaged three to four gardeners to look after the premises and had installed a drip irrigation system along the lake's periphery.

> **Members of the trust associated with the lake say they can no longer undertake many of the activities that were possible when an MoU with BBMP was in place**

Without the MoU, Usha Rajagopalan, co-founder of the PNLIT, said the trust's role has been reduced largely to activities that any member of the public can undertake during visiting hours. "Occasional clean-up drives continue, but interventions requiring funding, planning or direct involvement in the lake's upkeep are no longer possible," she said, adding that activities outside public access hours require permissions and that the authority to undertake work at the lake no longer rests with the trust.

Residents and regular visitors say the impact of this reduced community participation is now becoming visible. Areas that were once maintained as green spaces are increasingly covered with dried leaves and withering vegetation, while several plants and trees around the lake have not been watered regularly as the drip irrigation system installed by the trust is no longer functional. Narayana G., who has been visiting the lake for nearly 13 years, said the deterioration has become increasingly noticeable over the past six months. According to him, several plants have gradually died due to poor upkeep, while the condition of the lake has also affected bird activity. He said the lake would typically attract a large number of migratory birds during winter, but sightings have reduced as the quality of tree cover and the overall condition of the waterbody have deteriorated.

The trust traces its origins to 2010, when the BBMP undertook the rejuvenation of the Puttenahalli Lake.

In May 2011, the BBMP invited the trust to sign an MoU for maintenance of the lake, making the PNLIT the first citizen-led group in Bengaluru to formally enter into such an arrangement with the civic body. The agreement ensured conservation and community engagement efforts around the lake for nearly 15 years. The arrangement came to an end in 2020 when the MoU expired. Around the same time, a Karnataka High Court order held that the government could not enter into agreements relating to lakes with corporate entities.

Ms. Rajagopalan said the Greater Bengaluru Authority must explore ways to formally involve communities living around lakes, as they are often best placed to identify problems, monitor changes and ensure regular upkeep.

BIAL to double F&B and retail outlets at KIA in next five years

Hemanth C.S.
BENGALURU

Passengers at the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) will be getting more options to dine and shop, as restaurants, bars and retail outlets are set to double at the airport in the next five years.

The KIA, which is south India's busiest airport and the third largest in the country, at present offers many food and beverage (F&B) and retail experience at its two terminals and kerbside. With the airport set for expansion, more outlets would be added.

"The Terminal T-2 phase 2 planning is going on, The Quad area is getting re-imagined, the metro rail is coming up, there are experiences planned around the metro station as well. In the next five years, we are coming up with more than 200 outlets in the retail and F&B space," Pravat Paikray, vice-president (commercial), Bangalore International Airport Ltd., told *The Hindu*.

The KIA at present offers many food and beverage and retail experience at its two terminals and kerbside. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

He said that at present there are 200 outlets in both the terminals, and many iconic international brands, along with local ones, would be added in the next five years.

"We will be bringing in international iconic brands like we did for the T-2 phase 1 along with local brands," he added.

Mr. Paikray said that many international brands like Wolfgang Puck Kitchen and Bar, Giraffe World Kitchen, Jims Martin Kitchen, Jamie Oliver's Pizzeria, PF Chang, Jones the Grocer, Carluccio's and La Madeleine Express set up shop for the first time in India at the airport.

"On the one side we have these international iconic brands. On the other, we always believe it is our duty to promote the local brands and local heroes so we are the only place in the world where next to a luxury brand like Chanel there is a local brand called Forest Essentials next door. If there is a pan-Asian restaurant called PF Chang next to it we have a south Indian restaurant," he added.

Bengaluru to host airport FAB awards

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The 2026 Airport Food & Beverage (FAB) + Hospitality Conference and Awards will be held in Bengaluru on July 7 and 8.

This is the first time the conference is being held in India and will be hosted by the Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL).

"The FAB is a premier global airport conference in the airport hospitality industry, and this year's edition is the 15th FAB conference. It is being held in India for the first time," said Pravat Paikray, vice-President (commercial), BIAL.

"India is one of the fastest growing aviation markets in the world. Bengaluru represents the spirit of modern India. It is the silicon valley and start-up capital. The corporate presence, entrepreneurial mindset and world-class talent here make it a global city," he added.

BUSINESS CONNECT — A Business Initiative

Sublime Opens Its First Store at BLR Airport's Terminal 2

Sublime, a luxury Indian brand known for premium teas, dry fruits, spices, and honey, has opened its first airport store at Kempegowda International Airport Terminal 2. Marking its entry into travel retail, the store offers curated gifting collections, premium teas, and exclusive crockery designed to enhance the gifting experience. Inspired by Terminal 2's nature-themed architecture, the store provides travelers with elegant, high-quality gift options that combine sophistication, functionality, and thoughtful design. Speaking at the launch Uzma Irfan founder of Sublime and whole time Director of Prestige Group said, the launch aims to meet the growing demand for refined, well-presented gifting solutions among travelers.

Uzma Irfan and Alayna Zaid

Adigas Yatra – completion of 32 years

Adigas Yatra / Adigas World - a "dream venture", founded by K. Nagaraj Adiga's in 1994, is one of Karnataka's leading travel companies with over 32 years of experience. Starting with a successful Nepal tour, the company has grown to offer more than 500 domestic, international, pilgrimage, and customized tour packages. Known for quality service, comfortable travel, Kannada-speaking tour managers, and all-inclusive packages, Adigas has become a trusted choice for travelers. Recognized by the Ministry of Tourism and the Karnataka State Tourism Department, the company has earned multiple awards and a strong reputation for providing memorable travel experiences. For more info Website: www.adigasyatra.com

DS-Max Properties celebrates 20th Anniversary

Recently to commemorate its 20th anniversary, DS-Max Properties organized the "Flat Jothe Bhagya" lucky draw event in Bengaluru, rewarding customers with prizes including a free 2 BHK home, a car, two-wheelers, and home appliances. Managing Director S. P. Dayananda highlighted the company's achievements, noting that it has delivered over 50,000 homes, is currently developing 25,000 more, and aims to reach the milestone of 100,000 homes by 2030. Customer Sai Krishna won the grand prize of a free 2 BHK house. The event also featured appreciation from Kajal Aggarwal and Shivacharya Swamiji, who commended the company's contribution to making homeownership more accessible. The celebration was attended by Dr. K. V. Satish, industry leaders, dignitaries, and thousands of customers.

P.K. AJITH KUMAR

Bell and Trott lent me their bats; and I said, my gosh, I would like to make a comeback

Dennis Amiss has had a significant influence on cricket's evolution, going where no man had gone before in ODIs and mainstreaming protective headgear. The 83-year-old Englishman talks about living through a game-changing era, appreciating modern cricket, making big hundreds, and being tempted to return when he first wielded a modern bat

INTERVIEW

Dennis Amiss

P.K. Ajith Kumar

Dennis Amiss scored the first ODI hundred in history. He introduced the helmet to cricket. And he had a penchant for turning his hundreds into bigger hundreds (of his 11 Test centuries, eight went past 150). Excerpts from an exclusive interview Amiss gave *The Hindu* at the Edgbaston Golf Club in Birmingham:

How did the idea of wearing a helmet while batting come up?

I first mentioned it to Tony Greig and said, 'Look, you know, we are going to Australia, for Kerry Packer's World Series Cricket. There are 16 bowlers who can all bowl at 90 miles an hour. Having been there with Lillee and Thomson, I think we need a bit of protection. I am at a helmet place at the moment. They might be able to provide us with helmets.' I don't remember how I came to

> I was just tooting around and I saw this [motorcycle] helmet place. I told Tony Greig, 'There are 16 bowlers who can bowl at 90 miles an hour [in the Packer series]. We need a bit of protection

be there. But I suddenly thought, my gosh, helmets for cricket!

Nobody had used helmets in cricket before that?

Well, Mike Brearley had his skullcap. But nobody wore a helmet.

So you were riding a bike when you saw this helmet shop?

Yes, I was just tooting around and I saw this helmet place. I went in and inquired. And they said they couldn't specifically make them for cricket, but what they could do, they might adapt what they have got. So, I told Tony and he said he would have a word with Kerry Packer. He had a word with Kerry and Kerry said, 'Bring it on'. He said, 'The more innovation, the better. We are going to play white ball cricket, we are going to play floodlit cricket, we are going to have coloured clothing. Why not helmets?'

So I took three helmets out, one of which I wore and Tony had the other one. And then David Hookes got his jaw broken trying to hook Andy Roberts at Sydney. There were so many fast bowlers. Michael Holding, Andy Roberts, Garth Le Roux... Holding was the fastest, when he got his rhythm right.

How did the rest of the cricketing world react to the helmet?

I never thought it would take off in this country, but suddenly it did. And I was just amazed. And then we brought the grill out. And so, yeah, it was something I started. It is just amazing how it has all taken off and especially in this country which is very traditional.

How do you look back at your two double hundreds against the West Indies? At Kingston in 1974, England had a deficit of more than 200 and you saved that Test.

Yes, we were facing defeat and we had lost the first Test in Trinidad. So, it was important, really important that we save that one and keep the series alive. We battled through and it was a really good wicket. And I suppose that Keith Boyce was slippery for the first few overs, as quick as anybody. So it was a matter of trying to see Boyce off and then they had Bernard Julien who was a good bowler, and of course Lance Gibbs and Garry Sobers.

The other double hundred came at the Oval in 1976.

I was coming back after being left out and hit on the head early in the series. There were no helmets then. So I ducked into one at Lord's. But anyway, I changed my stance. I went and did a little bit back and across, which Kenny Barrington had done successfully all his career, and that helped me. We had beautiful sunshine and there were good wickets. My coach, Tiger Smith, always said to me, 'Dennis, you will get noughts, lots of low scores, but when you get in, you get 100. Take your guard again and get 150. When you get 150, take your guard again and get 200. And when you get 200 and so on.'

> I love short-form cricket. I am fine with all these innovative shots. What does concern me is the short boundaries. These days, with the bats, the ball springs off

Bishan Bedi helped you play against spin. How did that happen?

Well, we were on the [1972-73] tour of India with Tony Lewis, and you had the four spinners – Bedi, B. Chandrasekhar, Erapalli Prasanna, Venkataraghavan. And the wickets turned, and we had not come across wickets like that against such great bowlers.

And, you know, it gets in your mind, how do you play them and that sort of thing. We were going to Pakistan afterwards, after the tour. And I was left out for the last Test. Bishan came to me and he said, 'Why were you not batting well? At the beginning of the season, we thought you would be the main batter.' And I said, 'Well, you know, you bowl well at me and you have got me out. The only thing is I can't practise because the nets are in the middle.' He said, 'I will tell you what to do. Leave it with me. And he came back later and said, 'We have to get the net up after the match, tell the players to go home. You put your pads on. Pras, Venkat, and I will bowl at you, but not Chandrasekhar.'

And we played a match. 'Okay, that's two runs. Okay, that's one run. Four. Really good shot. Four. You would have been out there. I think we would have got you out there. So, you are one wicket down. One for 20.' That just gave me confidence. I went to Pakistan. It was very kind of Bish. And I think that he was chastised for that.

Was the decision to play the Packer series a tough one?

It was. It was a difficult time because the Warwickshire committee were entrenched in the England and Wales Cricket Board in London. They took a tough stand. It was only Packer saying that in the end, he would settle his disagreements with Australian cricket. Therefore, Test match cricket could resume, as long as all his players he had signed got a contract with their counties.

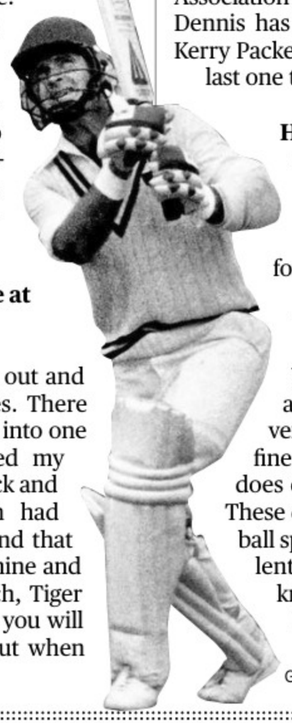
And of course, Warwickshire wouldn't give me a contract. So Richie Benaud, who was his number one on cricket, was in touch with Jack Bannister, who was chairman of the Professional Cricket Association and a Warwickshire player. They said Dennis has got to have a contract. Otherwise, Kerry Packer doesn't make the deal. So I was the last one to sign.

How do you view the innovations in cricket, shots such as the ramp shot?

I think it is wonderful. I love short-form cricket. We played 40 overs.

The John Player Sunday League?

Yes. And we had players like Mushtaq and Hanif Mohammad playing the reverse sweep, before Mike Gatting. I am fine with all these innovative shots. What does concern me is the short boundaries. These days, with the bats, the new bats, the ball springs off. Ian Bell and Jonathan Trott lent me their bats, just to have a little knock in the nets. And I said, my gosh, I would like to make a comeback.



GETTY IMAGES

GAME THEORY

Wimbledon's greatest champions: **supreme on grass**

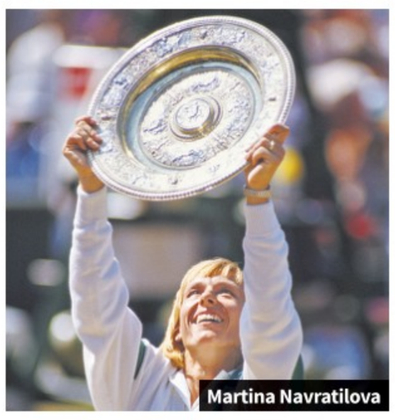
Novak Djokovic will be looking to equal Roger Federer's men's record of eight Wimbledon singles titles when the 2026 Championships begin on Monday. The 39-year-old hasn't tasted success at the grass Major since 2022, but has made two finals and a semifinal during this period. We look at the players who have won the most singles titles at Wimbledon. The first men's edition was played in 1877, the first women's event seven years later.

MOST WOMEN'S TITLES

Player	Titles	Years
Martina Navratilova	9	1978, 1979, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1990
Helen Wills Moody	8	1927, 1928, 1929, 1930, 1932, 1933, 1935, 1938
Dorothea Lambert Chambers	7	1903, 1904, 1906, 1910, 1911, 1913, 1914
Steffi Graf	7	1988, 1989, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1995, 1996
Serena Williams	7	2002, 2003, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2015, 2016
Blanche Bingley	6	1886, 1889, 1894, 1897, 1899, 1900
Suzanne Lenglen	6	1919, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1925
Billie Jean King	6	1966, 1967, 1968, 1972, 1973, 1975
Charlotte Cooper Sterry	5	1895, 1896, 1898, 1901, 1908
Lottie Dod	5	1887, 1888, 1891, 1892, 1893
Venus Williams	5	2000, 2001, 2005, 2007, 2008
Louise Brough	4	1948, 1949, 1950, 1955

MOST MEN'S TITLES

Player	Titles	Years
Roger Federer	8	2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2012, 2017
William Renshaw	7	1881, 1882, 1883, 1884, 1885, 1886, 1889
Pete Sampras	7	1993, 1994, 1995, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000
Novak Djokovic	7	2011, 2014, 2015, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022
Laurence Doherty	5	1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906
Bjorn Borg	5	1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980
Reginald Doherty	4	1897, 1898, 1899, 1900
Anthony Wilding	4	1910, 1911, 1912, 1913
Rod Laver	4	1961, 1962, 1968, 1969



Martina Navratilova

Helen Wills

Roger Federer

SOURCE: WIMBLEDON

PICTURE THIS

GETTY IMAGES

The punisher

Shinnecock Hills is one of those golf courses that defy conquests — it simply doesn't want you to win.

The venue for the 2026 US Open, Shinnecock evokes awe among experts, players and golf historians, who look at it as a timeless, albeit punishing, masterpiece.

This year's edition, won by Wyndham Clark with a score of four-under, featured just three players who finished under par. On the last two occasions the US Open was hosted by Shinnecock, only two players finished under par across both tournaments.

Just why is the links course such a challenge?

Set on sprawling open terrain, lashed by coastal gusts, it is shaped like a vortex that directs golfers into a path of constant wind direction changes as they navigate the holes.

According to those who have played there, Shinnecock's fairways create optical illusions off the tee, the canted greens are designed to keep the ball from the putting surfaces and the bunkers are downright malicious.

In addition to taming the course last weekend, Clark also had to master his nerves and overcome a hostile crowd to triumph.

Event at BMS college

BENGALURU: Nasha Mukt Bharat Abhiyan was held under the theme 'Viksit Bharat Ki Pehchaan' at BMS College of Engineering, in association with the Narcotics Control Bureau, Bengaluru Zonal Unit, Dishabodh Foundation, BMS PU College for Women, Heartfulness Institute, among others.

भारतीय सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान कोट्टायम
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY KOTTAYAM
(An Institution of National Importance under the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India)
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Email: registrar@iiitkottayam.ac.in Website: www.iiitkottayam.ac.in

No. IIITK/01/05/2026/2529 Date: June 25,2026

RECRUITMENT - CONTRACT FACULTY POSITIONS

Indian Institute of Information Technology Kottayam (IIIT Kottayam) invites online applications from Indian Nationals for empanelment as **Contract Faculty in Computer Science & Engineering and its interdisciplinary areas.**
Interested candidates may apply online through
https://adhocrecruit.iiitkottayam.ac.in
Last date of application: **5:00 pm (IST) on 08.07.2026.**
Interview schedule: 10.07.2026 – 10.00 a.m (IST) onwards
For details, visit **iiitkottayam.ac.in.**

Sd/-
REGISTRAR

Namma Metro contract worker electrocuted

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A contract labourer engaged in Namma Metro pillar lighting works died after allegedly suffering an electric shock during excavation work near Trinity Metro Station on Friday.

According to the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL), the incident occurred near Pillar No. 153, outside the metro station at 3.52 p.m. The deceased was employed by M.R. Electricals, the contractor entrusted with executing lighting works for the Namma Metro pillars.

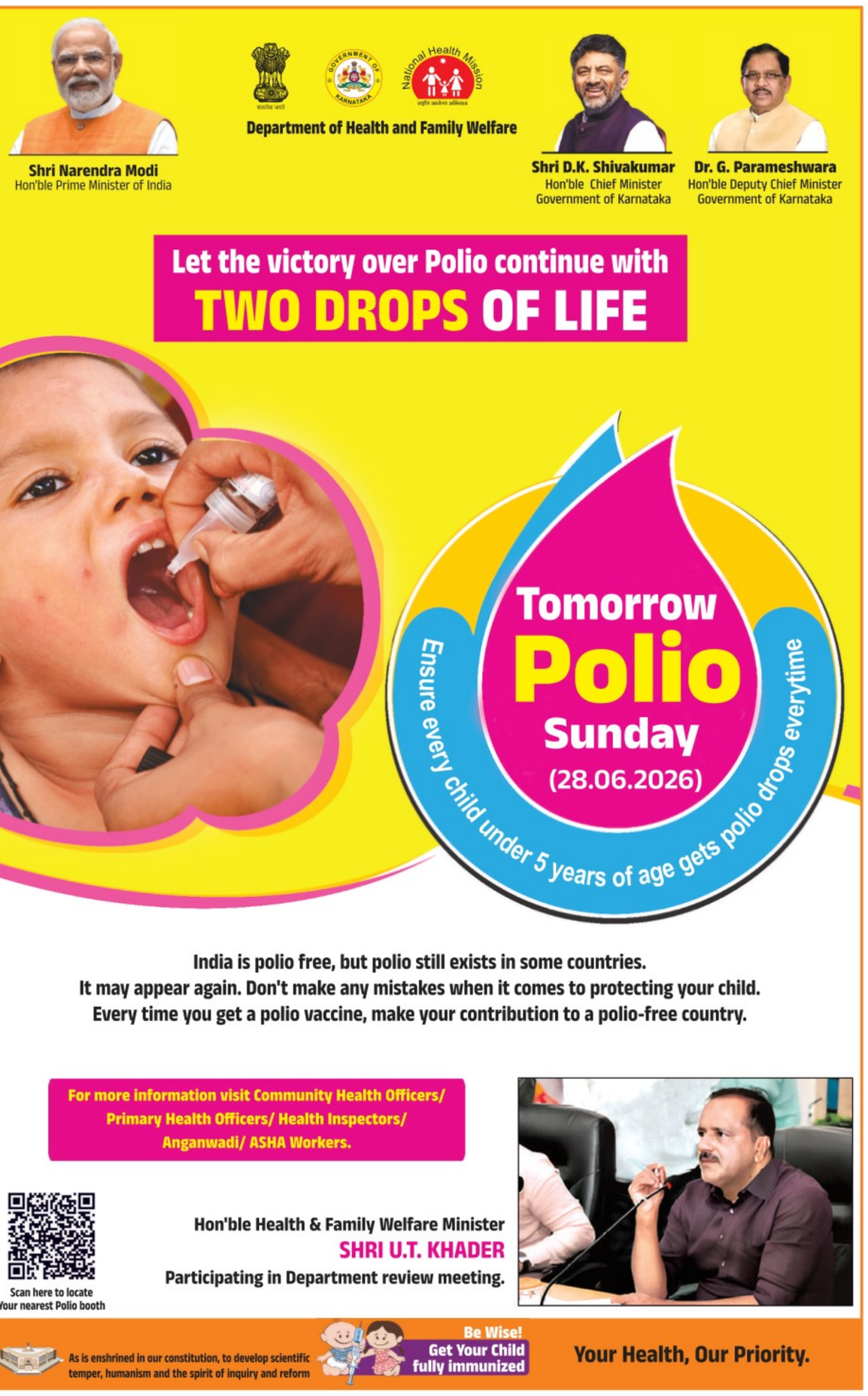
Excavation work

The BMRCL said the labourer came into contact with an electric source while carrying out earth pit excavation work.

He sustained a severe electric shock and was immediately rushed to the emergency ward of a private hospital.

However, doctors declared him dead on arrival, a release stated.

Officials said that the exact cause of the accident is yet to be determined. A detailed investigation has been initiated by the authorities to ascertain the circumstances that led to the fatal incident.



Triple murder accused taken into custody in Puducherry

55-year-old man, his wife, and their younger daughter were murdered in an apartment on Monday

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In a major breakthrough in the sensational K.R. Puram triple murder case, the Bengaluru police took absconding accused, Kenneth, into custody in Puducherry.

Somasundar, 55, his wife Muthulakshmi, 48, and their younger daughter, Supriya, 20, were allegedly murdered at an apartment in Seegehalli in the K.R. Puram Police Station limits in east Bengaluru late on the night of June 22 by the couple's elder daughter and her male friend. Their bodies were found in a flat at Sai Green Apartment in Dhamnika Layout, Seegehalli.

Somasundar was a software professional, and Supriya was pursuing her graduation. The K.R. Puram police had earlier arrested 24-year-old Shweta, the elder daughter, at a railway station in Puducherry, while Kenneth, her male friend, was absconding. Six special teams were deployed across Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry to track him down.

Kenneth

According to police sources, a team from the K.R. Puram Police Station apprehended Kenneth on Thursday night following sustained technical surveillance and investigation. The police officials said that after the alleged murders, Kenneth and Shweta travelled separately. They deliberately parted ways to evade the police. They reached Puducherry separately.

First, the police managed to trace Shweta, and detained her in Puducherry. Later, based on technical evidence and continuous tracking of Kenneth's movements, the police were able to locate Kenneth.

Kenneth is expected to be brought to Bengaluru for further interrogation. The police are likely to question both Kenneth and Shweta to establish the sequence of events, ascertain the motive behind the killings, and determine the role played by each accused in the crime. According to a senior police officer, Kenneth took shelter in beach shacks in Puducherry, believing he could evade detection as such accommodations generally do not require guests to produce identity proof.

Officials said that multiple special investigation teams were constituted immediately after the murders, with each team assigned a specific task. While one team tracked the movements of the two accused, another analysed CCTV footage and carried out technical surveillance.

The police said Shweta, who was in a live-in relationship with Kenneth, had accumulated debts of around ₹30 lakh with him and they had frequently quarrelled with her family over a share in the family property, which is suspected to be the reason behind the murder.

KPTCL deploys drone technology to fix defects in transmission lines

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Limited (KPTCL) has successfully deployed advanced drone technology for the inspection of High Voltage (HV) and Extra High Voltage (EHV) transmission corridors across the State.

The initiative has not only helped the KPTCL fix defects, but reduce the number of power outages, according to a release.

It stated that through drone technology, the officials have inspected 11,000 transmission towers, identified and rectified over 1.5 lakh technical defects. The KPTCL claimed that fixing these technical defects has led to 85% reduction in transmission-related power outages where incidents have dropped from 519 to just 73 across inspected corridors.

So far, more than 3,370 km of transmission lines have been inspected, including over 2,500 km of 220 kV lines and 843 km of 400 kV corridors.

V. Ram Prasath Manohar, Managing Director, KPTCL, stated in a release, "Our focus is shifting from repairing faults after they occur to identifying and addressing risks before they lead to failures. Drones are equipped with high-resolution cameras, thermal imaging systems, and LiDAR sensors hence we can conduct close range inspections of transmission towers, conductors, and insulators passing through dense forests, hilly regions, and densely populated urban areas. The technology enables engineers to detect faults with a level of precision that is difficult to achieve through conventional methods."

The release stated that another reason to use drones for inspection is that the thermal imaging cameras are capable of identifying abnormal heat signatures and hotspots caused by loose electrical connections or equipment deterioration. The data collected through drone surveys is being integrated into the KPTCL's digital asset management ecosystem and will eventually be linked to the corporation's upcoming Digital Twin Platform, enabling real-time monitoring of the transmission network from the central control room.

K.J. George, Minister for Energy and Tourism, was quoted in the release, "Inspecting Karnataka's vast transmission network spanning nearly 45,000 km through conventional methods is both time-consuming and challenging. By deploying drones, we can now conduct comprehensive 360 degrees inspections of transmission assets in a fraction of the time. The technology enables our engineers to detect even the smallest defects that are invisible to the naked eye."

Vice-President to attend 31st foundation day of RGUHS tomorrow

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences (RGUHS) will celebrate its 31st Foundation Day along with the Nasha Muktha Bharath Abhiyan and International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking on Sunday, at Kanteerava Stadium, Bengaluru.

Guests
Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan will attend the event as chief guest. Governor and Chancellor of the university Thaawarchand Gehlot will preside over the programme.

Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar and Governor of Andhra Pradesh S. Abdul Nazeer will be present as distinguished guests.

Sharanaprakash R. Patil, Minister for Medical Education and Skill Development and the Pro-Chancellor of the university, and U. T. Khader, Minister for Health and Family Welfare, will attend.

Healthy lifestyle
Addressing the media on Friday, RGUHS Vice-Chancellor Bhagavan B.C., stressed that educational institutions play a vital role in promoting healthy lifestyles and preventing drug abuse through awareness, counselling, and community engagement.

He further stated that the campaign encourages students to act as ambassadors for a drug-free society by spreading awareness among their peers and within their communities.

Dr. Bhagavan explained the University's continued commitment to the objectives of the Nasha Muktha Bharat Abhiyan and highlighted ongoing efforts to organise awareness programmes, workshops, seminars, and outreach activities across affiliated colleges to educate students on the harmful effects of substance abuse.

The Foundation Day celebrations will conclude with a collective pledge by participants to uphold the values of academic excellence, ethical healthcare, and social responsibility, and to contribute towards building a healthier and drug-free India, he briefed.

Bescom gets 6,500 applications for permanent electricity connection without OC

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

As the Energy Department opens the window for house owners to get permanent electricity connections without applying for an Occupancy Certificate, the Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited (Bescom) has received 6,500 applications from Tuesday to Friday.

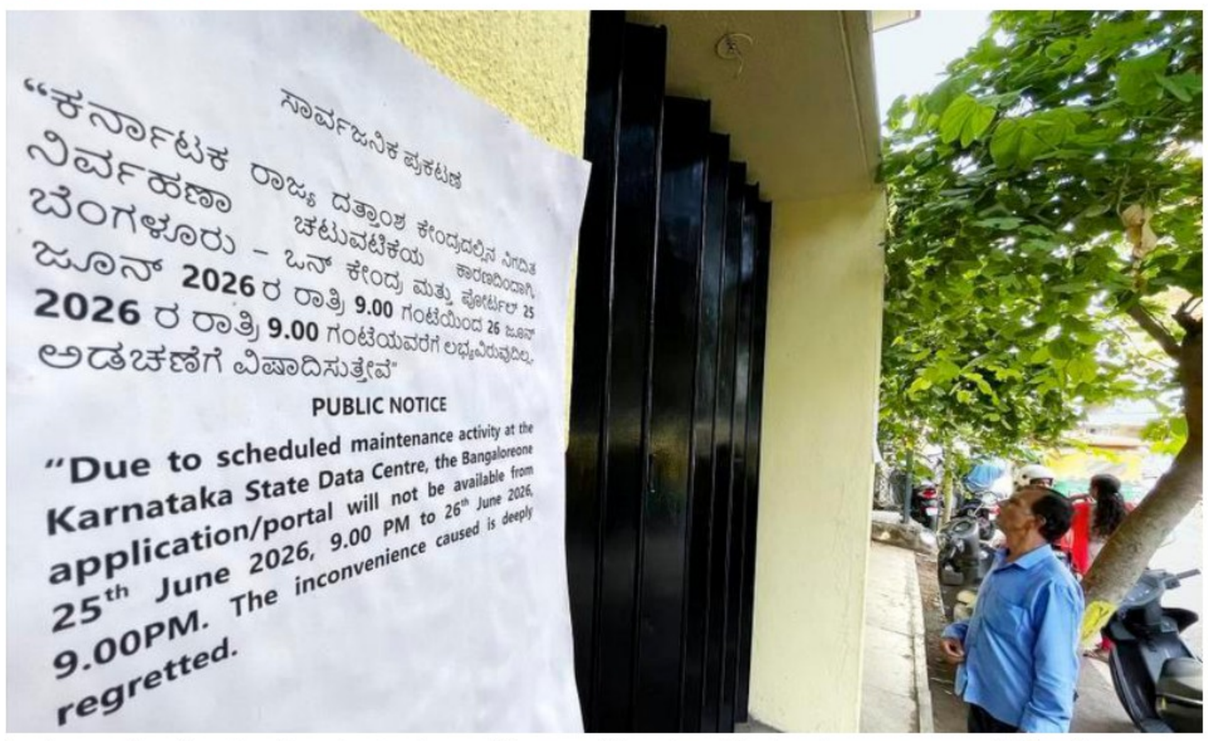
On Monday, the State government granted house owners an exemption to obtain permanent electricity connections without Occupancy Certificates, provided that the construction of the structure was completed before May 31, 2026. This is for those buildings constructed on sites measuring 2,400 sq. feet with ground plus three floors (G+3) or stilt parking with four floors (S+4).

A senior official from Bescom said, "The 6,500 applications include those house owners who had pending applications for permanent power connection, house owners who had not applied but had received temporary connections, and those who neither have temporary nor permanent electricity connections."

He added, "Whenever applications are received, section engineers from each subdivision will visit the site, as this is limited to sites measuring 2,400 sq. feet with an allowable deviation of 20%, which comes up to 2,888 sq. feet. The 20% deviation is mainly attributed to the setback area. Photographs of the buildings attached with GPS locations can only show the number of floors and not the exact size of the plot. In case the plot does not fall under the prescribed parameters, the application will be rejected, and they must apply for an OC."

The last date to apply is July 6, 2026.

Portal down



A notice pasted outside a closed BengaluruOne Centre at Vijayanagar informs the public about the temporary unavailability of the Karnataka government's online services across various departments, in Bengaluru on Friday, following a scheduled shutdown at the Karnataka State Data Centre for infrastructure upgrades. K. MURALI KUMAR

Car with Darshan's son involved in minor accident

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A car in which Kannada actor Darshan's son, Vineesh, was travelling was involved in a road accident in Bengaluru's R.R. Nagar on Thursday. According to the police, the car allegedly hit a two-wheeler, leaving the rider with minor injuries.

Argument
Following the accident, residents stopped the car, and a heated argument broke out between the driver and the people gathered at the spot. Videos of the confrontation were widely shared on social media.

No complaint
The police said no complaint has been registered in connection with the accident.

They said that the matter appears to have been settled at the spot itself, and no further legal action has been initiated so far.

Regular govt. recruitment essential for efficient governance: ACS

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

"Unlike other States, regular recruitments have not taken place in various departments at the State government level in Karnataka," said Gaurav Gupta, Additional Chief Secretary to the Energy Department.

Speaking after inaugurating the National Electrical Safety Week held here on Friday, Mr. Gupta said, "The Karnataka Public Service Commission is also not working in this direction. Every year, there should be a mandatory call and recruitment made for the post of Gazetted Probationers. For instance, if the cadre strength is 2000, then 2% to 3%, which is 40 to 60 new recruitments, should happen in every department."

Mr. Gupta said that if the recruitment happens once in every 10 years, then it gets difficult to work.

Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar has appointed two senior bureaucrats, including Mr. Gupta, to oversee the recruitment process in government departments.

"I am in charge of recruitment in 34 departments in the State. We are also getting permission to fill the vacancies in different boards and corporations. As per the government study, the growth of jobs in private sector is not up to the expectations. In 1990s and 2000s, the IT sector was booming and there was growth of jobs in private sector. I am glad that under the leadership of Mr. Shivakumar, filling of vacancies in government departments is being given importance."

Mr. Gupta announced that Escoms, distribution companies and other institutions in the Energy Department would dedicate ₹1 lakh each to create awareness about electrical safety on various media platforms.

Timings
BENGALURU

SATURDAY, JUN. 27	
RISE 05:56	SET 18:49
RISE 16:47	SET 03:27
SUNDAY, JUN. 28	
RISE 05:56	SET 18:49
RISE 17:39	SET 04:15
MONDAY, JUN. 29	
RISE 05:57	SET 18:50
RISE 18:30	SET 05:05

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	34	15
Mysuru	30	20
Bengaluru	30	21

Bengaluru Today
30°C The weather will be slight warm. Spell of light rain and thundershower with gusty winds may occur. Night will be pleasant.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
29°C Morning will be pleasant. Day will be slight warm. Spell of moderate rain and thundershower will occur.

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Five schoolchildren fall from moving van, escape with minor injuries

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The incident occurred in Gayatri Layout, where the van, which was transporting school children, reportedly hit a pothole.
IMAGE FOR REPRESENTATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY

Five schoolchildren narrowly escaped a major tragedy after they fell out of a moving school van when its rear door suddenly opened in Bengaluru's K.R. Puram on Friday.

The incident occurred in Gayatri Layout, where the van, which was transporting schoolchildren, reportedly hit a pothole. The impact is believed to have caused the rear door to swing open, which resulted in five children seated at the back being thrown onto the road.

According to the police, the children escaped with only minor injuries as there was no traffic on the stretch at the time of the incident. The injured children were provided immediate medical attention by residents.

The entire incident was captured on a CCTV camera. The footage, which has since gone viral on social media, shows the van's rear door opening unexpectedly before the children tumble onto the road while the vehicle continues moving.

The traffic police later seized the van as part of the investigation. Officials said that they are examining the exact circumstances that led to the rear door opening, including whether there was any mechanical failure or negligence on the part of the driver.

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CBC 21213/11/0001/2627

Rail Wheel Plant/Bela
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E-Open Tender Notice No:-S/RWP/E/2026-27/12 dated: 25.06.2026 Principal Chief Materials Manager /Rail Wheel Plant, Bela for and on behalf of the **President of India** invites **online "e-Open Tender"**, through Indian Railways E-Procurement Website **www.ireps.gov.in**, for supply of following Stores item at RWP/Bela. The closing time of all tenders is 14:00 hrs. **(1) Tender No.:** 01261027 **Short Description of item:** Clay Graphite Stopper **Quantity:** 240000 Nos. **Due Date/Time of closing:** 24.07.2026 at 14:00 Hrs. 1-Website address, on which full tender details can be seen and downloaded from, is www.ireps.gov.in **For PCMM/RWP/Bela**
RWP/CPRO/ADVT/2026-27/41

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West : Site No.859,
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Muthathi drowning: Kumaraswamy writes to Minister seeking additional security measures

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

Expressing concern over the increasing instances of drowning reported from Cauvery river at Muthathi in Mandya district, Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel H. D. Kumaraswamy has written to Home Minister Priyank Kharge seeking additional security measures in the area.

Mr Kumaraswamy's letter to the Home Minister comes in the wake of the recent drowning in Muthathi of five persons, including four women related to each other, on Wednesday.

36 people in five years

A popular tourist destination in Mallavalli taluk of Mandya district, Muthathi had witnessed the drowning of 36 people in the Cauvery river over the last five years including 11 over the last five months, said Mr. Kumaraswamy citing statistics.

Mr. Kumaraswamy, who represents Mandya in the Lok Sabha, emphasised the need to prevent such tragedies.

He attributed the recurring deaths of tourists to the dangerous whirlpools in the river at Muthathi.

In the letter, the Union Minister has urged Mr. Kharge to establish a police outpost in the village while also immediately deploying additional security personnel along the Cauvery riverbank at Muthathi.

He said there was a need to install warning signboards, erecting barbed-wire fencing and barricades along the riverbank to prevent visitors from entering the water while taking urgent steps to open a police outpost in the village.

Mr. Kumaraswamy noted that Muthathi is one of the State's well-known tourist destinations and devotees from different parts of Karnataka visit the Sri Anjaneya Swamy temple in the village and take a holy dip in the Cauvery.

However, in the absence of adequate warning signboards and rescue personnel, visitors unknowingly venture into dangerous stretches of the river and lose their lives, the Union Minister said, drawing the Home Minister's attention to the issue.

GBA cancels 'My e-Khata, My Right' campaign today

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has cancelled the 'Nanna e-Khata, Nanna Hakku' (My e-Khata, My Right) campaign scheduled for June 27 in view of the Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Jayanti celebrations across the city, said GBA Chief Commissioner M. Maheshwar Rao.

"The weekly campaign, held every Saturday to assist citizens with e-khata applications, corrections, status verification, and other related grievances, will not be conducted this week. The drive will resume on July 4, and continue on Saturdays as usual," Mr. Rao said.

COVER

GETTY IMAGES/ ISTOCK

Hidden role of furniture in workplace fatigue

Poor layouts, lighting and static work setups may be quietly draining energy and affecting wellbeing through the workday

Dhiren Gopal

We have a bizarre collective delusion about white-collar work. We think sitting down is a form of rest. It isn't. If you doubt that, just look around your office floor at 3 p.m. The room is a ghost town of human energy. Necks are locked, eyes are burning, and everyone is treating caffeine like a medical intervention. You haven't lifted a single heavy box or walked up 10 flights of stairs today, yet your body feels like absolute lead. Why?

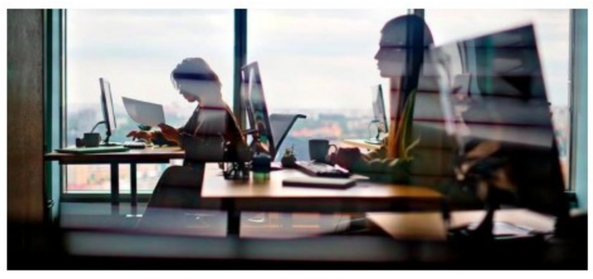
Because your workspace is quietly running a physical tax on your anatomy. The setup looks fine on paper – a standard chair, a flat desk, and neat geometric rows. It looks organised, so we assume it works. It doesn't.

When your office furniture is completely stiff and unyielding, your muscles have to stay constantly contracted just to manage those unthinking shifts. It's a slow, relentless drain on your system.

Scientific Reports, a peer-reviewed journal, ran the data on this exact pattern, proving that static sitting chokes your local blood flow and locks deep tension into your lower spine. Chairs get all the PR budget, but your desk actually dictates your spine's geometry.

Moving workspace

Think about the mechanics. A surface that sits too low forces your spine to round out. One that's too high leaves your shoulders jacked up in a permanent shrug for hours. If the depth is wrong, your neck juts forward like a tripod to read the monitor.



The fix is blunt: get the workspace moving. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in the U.S. tracked professionals using sit-stand desks and found a massive drop in daily fatigue along with a much better headspace. Just switching your position from sitting to standing once an hour cuts your overall musculoskeletal strain by more than 30%. Even your desktop layout plays a role. Shoving daily essentials outside your natural arm's reach forces constant twisting and overstretching, micro-straining your muscles over a long shift.

This physical reality is completely flipping how modern office interiors are mapped out. Design has shifted from a visual choice to a purely behavioural one. The old, rigid 1:1 desk layout is dying out to make room for a fluid 1:0.7 model. Progressive companies are cutting down the total number of fixed desks and using that empty space to build focus pods, quiet zones and casual breakout corners. It gives people the physical freedom to shift their setting depending on the task across a 10-hour day.

Light: a swift switch

Look at the light, most offices treat lighting like background noise, but it acts as a direct biological switch for your brain. Natural daylight is the ultimate stamina booster. Cornell University research found that daylit office environments trigger a 51% drop in employee eye-strain and a 56% reduction in afternoon drowsiness.

Northwestern University found something even better: people working near windows get an average of 46 minutes more sleep a night, directly changing how sharp they feel the next morning.

Just watch the desk placement. Facing a window head-on creates a blinding screen contrast. Put the desks perpendicular to the glass: you get the light without the headaches.

Healthy environment

When you don't have windows, which is the reality for most Indian workspaces, artificial light takes over. Harsh, overhead fluorescent tubes create a flat, high-contrast environment that forces your eyes to work double time. Colour temperatures matter here. Cool blue tones keep you alert in the morning, but warm yellow light makes you crash right after lunch.

The market is already reacting to this. The latest Knight Frank India Real Estate Report shows that corporate tenants are deeply auditing indoor air quality, ventilation, and real performance metrics before they sign a lease. They want environments that keep people awake.

We also focus better when we can see something green. Plants aren't corporate ornaments; they are cognitive recovery tools. A massive review of over 70 studies found that biophilic design directly improves working memory and attention spans. The magic number is 12% green coverage, which is the threshold where visual access to nature actively lowers fatigue. The University of Oregon even found that employees with views of greenery took significantly less sick leave, saving companies weeks of lost productivity.

It shows up on the balance sheet too. The ANAROCK Sustainable Real Estate Paper proves that companies are heavily prioritising green features because they directly slash operational overheads while protecting the health of the workforce. When a workspace couples smart engineering with flexible, ergonomic layouts, total workplace productivity can jump by up to 17.7%.

Office fatigue doesn't happen because of one big crisis. It's the result of a hundred tiny, relentless frictions. A dark corner, a bad desk height, cold lighting, a rigid chair. Workspaces need to be built from the inside out around human movement.

The writer is director of Featherlite Group.

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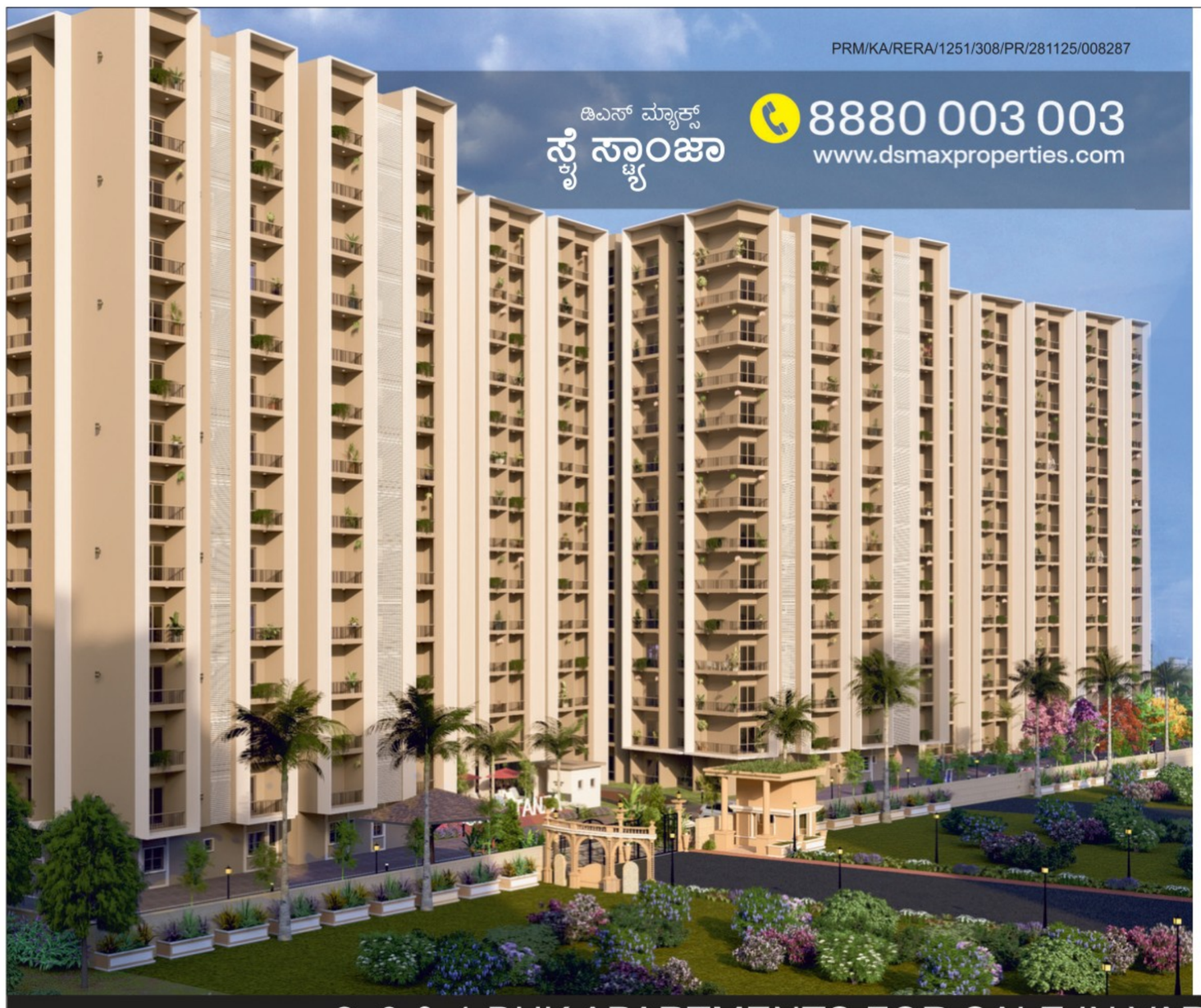

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8880 013 310	8880 013 310	8880 465 465	8880 461 461	8880 461 461	8880 461 461
G+14	G+14	G+14	G+14	G+14	G+3
PRM/KA/RERA/1251/308/PR/291225/008366	PRM/KA/RERA/1250/304/PR/150224/006622	PRM/KA/RERA/1251/308/PR/230126/008427	PRM/KA/RERA/1251/310/PR/050526/008622	PRM/KA/RERA/1251/308/PR/160824/006972	PRM/KA/RERA/1250/301/PR/251024/007178
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CREDAI

BG-BGE

From Page One

Biker critical after tree branch falls on his head

Satish is currently undergoing treatment and is in a coma.

Sporadic incident

When contacted, a senior GBA official from the West City Corporation said it was a sporadic incident and that, while tragic, the team was extending all possible support.

"Sometimes, pruning on one side can cause a tree to lean in that direction due to imbalance. However, we are still trying to understand what went wrong, as this appears to be a sporadic incident, and no specific reason has been identified," the official said.

He added that the area has many old trees. "Many of these trees have dead branches that do not appear to be dead," the official said. Sometimes, pruning is done during night hours also if complaints are overwhelming. During such times, due to low visibility, branches are cut in a way that an imbalance is created, the official further added.

It may be noted that last June, a 29-year-old HR executive slipped into a coma after a tree branch fell on his head while he was riding his scooter in Hanumanthnagar. He later succumbed to his injuries, following which the government booked Forest Cell officials for negligence and transferred the District Conservator of Forests.

Radhika Balakrishnan receives honorary fellowship from RBC, U.K.

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Carnatic vocalist, academic, and educator Radhika Balakrishnan has been awarded an honorary fellowship by the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire (RBC), one of the United Kingdom's most prestigious performing arts institutions.

She is the first Carnatic vocalist to receive an honorary fellowship from the Conservatoire. The award was formally presented at a ceremony held at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, said a press release.

35 acres of govt. land worth ₹800 crore given to private parties by revenue officer

The Police Wing of the Karnataka Lokayukta says the officer's duty was to verify the legality of competing claims and protect government property where required

Rishita Khanna
BENGALURU

The case concerns 35 acres spread across Survey Nos. 9, 10 and 11 of Singhahalli village in Yelahanka hobli. FILE PHOTO

In what was supposed to be an inquiry into the ownership of government land, a revenue officer entrusted with examining the dispute allegedly became part of the very chain of events that enabled private parties to secure government land valued at more than ₹800 crore.

The Police Wing of the Karnataka Lokayukta said the officer's duty was to verify the legality of competing claims and protect government property where required. Instead, he allegedly relied on disputed revenue records and actions that strengthened private claims over the land, ultimately facilitating its conversion into saleable property.

The case involves more than 35 acres of government Kharab land and lake area in Yelahanka, where a revenue inspector and four other officers allegedly enabled the transfer of public land into private hands through a series of administrative actions and record alterations.

Pending since 2021

Although the Police Wing sought sanctions for prosecution in 2021 through a proposal sent to the State government under Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act, the government has neither approved nor rejected the request. The proposal has remained pending for more than five years.

Private land

The case concerns 35 acres spread across Survey Nos. 9, 10 and 11 of Singhahalli village in Yelahanka hobli. The land was originally part of Singhahalli Lake and classified as Kharab land, making it ineligible for private ownership.

Over the years, RTCs (Record of Rights, Tenancy, and Crops), mutation entries, Index of Land Records Register (ILRR) records and survey sketches were created in the names of private individuals and subsequently treated as genuine revenue documents. Once these entries became part of the official revenue system, they formed the basis for ownership of claims over land originally recorded as government property.

KIADB

The claims gained momentum when the Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board (KIADB) initiated acquisition proceedings in the area. Private individuals asserted ownership over portions of the land and challenged the acquisition before the Karnataka High Court. According to the proposal, the disputed revenue records continued to be relied upon during these proceedings, allowing the ownership claims to persist and gain administrative legitimacy.

When revenue authorities revisited the matter in 2024, they encountered a clear contradiction: original survey and archival records continued to describe the land as lake and government property, while later revenue entries reflected private possession and ownership.

The proposal argues that, instead of resolving this contradiction through verification of primary records, officials relied on the later entries and proceeded with further administrative actions that strengthened the private claims.

The paper trail eventually translated into physical transactions. In 2024, multiple sale deeds were executed through the Byatarayanapura Sub-Registrar's Office, with portions of the land changing hands between private parties, sources said.

Pejawar seer welcomes probe into alleged Ayodhya Ram Temple fund embezzlement case

The Hindu Bureau
MANGALURU

Pejawar Mutt seer Vishwaprasanna Tirtha speaking to reporters in Udupi on Friday. UMESH S. SHETTIGAR

Seer of Udupi Pejawar Mutt Vishwaprasanna Tirtha, one of the trustees of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust, on Friday, expressed hope that the ongoing probe into the alleged embezzlement of donations at the Ayodhya Ram Mandir would bring out the truth.

Speaking to reporters in Udupi, Vishwaprasanna said that if the allegations were true, the guilty should be punished. It was unfortunate that such an incident had reportedly happened at the Ram Mandir, the centre of devotion for lakhs of devotees worldwide, he said.

When asked if he was not aware of the allegations, Vishwaprasanna said that, as a trustee, he would make certain suggestions and hoped that the trust members and officials would carry them out. The seer said he could not be present all the time to oversee their implementation.

Vishwaprasanna said he was not aware of the reported resignation of the trust's general secretary Champat Rai. "We trustees have a WhatsApp group and Mr. Rai sometimes texts me. Either way, I am not informed about his resignation and hence cannot comment on it," the seer said. He further said the issue would be discussed in detail at the trust's July 11 meeting.

Seva list

The seer said the trust was of the view that there should be neither a seva list in the temple nor any performance of sevas so as to ensure equality among devotees.

For years, the seer has been advocating seva to Lord Ram by way of constructing houses for the poor and the downtrodden instead of making donations at temple hundis. Such initiatives are being taken up in and around Udupi by various organisations and by the Mutt, he said.

One could render seva to the lord by doing social service, he said.

THE HINDU
PROPERTYPLUS

Some partymen spreading false information on ties with DKS: Vijayendra

The Hindu Bureau
DHARMASTHALA

Denying business or any other links with Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, Bharatiya Janata Party's State unit president B.Y. Vijayendra has said that his own party colleagues have spread "false information".

"If I had links with Mr. Shivakumar, I would be as guilty as some of our MLAs, who cross-voted in the MLC elections and are working against the party," he told reporters in Dharmasthala on Friday.

"I categorically deny business or any other links with D.K. Shivakumar. The respect that I have given to Mr. Shivakumar is the one given to a fellow head of the State unit of a party. I know some of my own party colleagues have spread this information (about his alleged links with Mr. Shivakumar). I have prayed for the well-being of those persons," he said, stating that he was speaking frankly after having darshan of Lord Manjunatha and providing clarity about the rumours following cross-voting.

BJP State unit president B.Y. Vijayendra addressing reporters in Dharmasthala on Friday. RAGHAVA M.

> If I had links with Mr. Shivakumar, I would be as guilty as some of our MLAs, who cross-voted in the MLC elections
>
> **B.Y. VIJAYENDRA**
> BJP State unit president

Though voting in the Legislative Council elections was through a secret ballot, in the coming days, the truth will come out to reveal which BJP legislators had cross-voted, he further stated.

In the recent Council elections, the ruling Congress won five of the seven seats, while the BJP secured two and JD(S) drew a blank. Cross-voting by some BJP and JD(S) legislators helped Congress secure 11 more than the expected, leaving the BJP red-faced. The saffron party's Central leaders have pulled up State leaders on this issue.

"I have left it to the party high command to take action. I was among the party workers who were hurt following cross-voting. I proposed a meeting of party legislators in Dharmasthala. On the advice of party seniors, I left the issue to the party high command," Mr. Vijayendra said.

He said he met party leaders in New Delhi over three days and directly came to Dharmasthala on Thursday night. He has prayed for better rains across Karnataka and for strength to steer the party back to power in the State, he said.

He will return to Bengaluru and speak with C.T. Ravi, MLC and head of the party's committee looking into cross-voting. On the statement by former Chief Minister D.V. Sadananda Gowda that he had hinted at cross-voting but no action was taken, Mr. Vijayendra said he spoke to the party's State general secretary, who said that information provided by Mr. Gowda was general in nature.

On Eshwarappa

On the statement of K.S. Eshwarappa regarding cross-voting, Mr. Vijayendra said he will not react as Mr. Eshwarappa is no longer associated with the party.

"As he has referred to party MLAs, I would like to remind him that 17 Congress MLAs broke away to join the BJP, leading to the formation of the government led by B.S. Yediyurappa. You were a part of the Cabinet as Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister, and I would not like to say anything about the way you worked. A contractor ended his life during your tenure while you enjoyed the perks of a Cabinet post," Mr. Vijayendra said.

E-auction of 574 defunct/unallotted Excise licences may fetch ₹550 crore

Notification likely to be issued on Monday; for the first time, quota for SCs/STs has been earmarked in the auction

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The online auction of defunct/unallotted Excise licences, which had been delayed owing to litigation, is likely to be notified on Monday, and the State government is expected to earn at least ₹550 crore from it. A total of 574 liquor licences that have remained defunct/unallotted are going under the hammer.

For the first time, reservation for Scheduled Castes, incorporating internal reservation, and Scheduled Tribes has been earmarked in the auction.

The auction consists of 477 CL-2A licences for retail shops and 92 CL-9A licences for bars. The online auction is seen as part of resource mobilisation for the State exchequer, which is running tight owing to huge committed expenditure besides about ₹51,000 crore being spent on the five guarantee schemes.

D.K. Shivakumar. ANI

Liquor licences are much sought after in Karnataka since the last batch of licences were issued in 1993-94. The auction has been opposed by wine merchants' associations

Sources stated that preparations have been made for the auction, which has also received sanction from Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, who holds the Finance portfolio.

"The government is expecting at least ₹550 crore which would be the base price, but it may end up earning a few hundred crores more," the sources added.

The earlier notified base price for the auction ranged between ₹70 lakh and ₹1.5 crore depending on the location. The auctioned licences will be granted for a period of five years. At 180, the highest number of licences is being auctioned in Bengaluru Urban district.

The earlier auction, which was to be held in January 2026, had been notified in December 2025, but was later questioned in the Karnataka High Court, which cleared it in April 2026.

The auction has been opposed by wine merchants' associations, who earlier claimed that some of the functional licences had also been identified to go under the hammer.

Petitions had been filed in the High Court against the auction, but the court has paved the way for auctioning of the licences, sources said.

Liquor licences are much sought after in Karnataka since the last batch of licences were issued in 1993-94. In places such as Bengaluru, sub-letting of licences runs into several crores.

Review meeting

Meanwhile, the Chief Minister, who reviewed the Excise Department on Friday, warned the officials that they would be transferred from the department through the necessary legal route if they were found to not be delivering on their responsibilities.

CM directs officials to step up action against GST evasion

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Friday directed Commercial Taxes Department officials to intensify action against GST evasion while ensuring that honest taxpayers do not face harassment. He said every goods vehicle entering or leaving Karnataka must carry proper documents and that there should be no scope for revenue leakage.

Chairing a review meeting of the Commercial Taxes Department, Mr. Shivakumar said the department played a critical role in mobilising resources for the State, and expressed confidence that it would surpass the tax collection target set for the current financial year.

"There should be no compromise in preventing tax evasion. Not a single goods vehicle should cross a checkpost or the State border without proper documents and complete accountability," he told officials.

The Chief Minister said the department now had data relating to nearly 12 lakh taxpayers and should make better use of technology and data analytics to monitor compliance. At the same time, he stressed that enforcement should not come at the cost of genuine taxpayers.

GST collection

Reviewing GST collection, Mr. Shivakumar said Karnataka had recorded a 9% growth up to May 2026, placing it among the better-performing States and ahead of Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh. Telangana had registered a growth of 10%.

"We are among the top-performing States in GST collection. Now we should identify ways to move to the first position," he said.

The Chief Minister also reviewed measures to curb GST fraud through the department's analytical portal developed in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad. He said the platform had helped detect several instances of fake invoicing and fraudulent input tax credit claims.

Officials informed the meeting that action against bogus firms had resulted in the recovery of ₹166 crore and that arrests in such cases had been stepped up. Mr. Shivakumar asked the department to further strengthen legal action against those involved in creating shell companies for tax fraud.

Full restoration of safaris in Bandipur and Nagarahole

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Karnataka government on Friday announced the full restoration of the jungle safari (park excursion) at the Bandipur and Nagarahole Tiger Reserves.

Safaris were suspended in Bandipur and Nagarhole since November 2025 in the wake of the human-tiger conflict in the region. The government suspended safaris in both the tiger reserves following back-to-back tiger attacks in which three farmers died and one was injured.

Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, who also holds the Forest, Ecology and Environment portfolio, said the government has decided to fully reopen the jungle safari at two tiger reserves, based on the assessment made by the technical committee of experts and officials.

The government had decided to permit the deployment of only 50% of the safari vehicles and staff. FILE PHOTO

"The government has decided to fully reopen the jungle safari (park excursion) at the Bandipur and Nagarahole Tiger Reserves, based on the effective carrying capacity scientifically assessed by a technical committee of experts and officials," a statement from Mr. Shivakumar's office said.

It added that the technical committee's report has been accepted by the State government, and directions have been issued to operate the jungle safari in a regulated manner, in line with the committee's recommendations.

"Karnataka holds immense potential in eco-tourism and has consistently followed a model of sustainable tourism which generates local employment and livelihood opportunities while boosting the local economy," it added.

It further said that the State remains committed to the eco-tourism model that safeguards ecological integrity and ensures that tourism contributes positively to conservation, local livelihoods, and visitor experience.

There had been demand from the stakeholders in the tourism industry urging the government to lift the ban on safaris.

The Karnataka State Wildlife Board in January had recommended the setting up of an expert committee to study the carrying capacity of the safari vehicles in the two tiger reserves.

An interim report in February had recommended that safari operations in Bandipur and Nagarahole Tiger Reserves be resumed in a phased manner.

The government had decided to permit the deployment of only 50% of the safari vehicles and staff that were in use before the suspension of the operations in November 2025.

HC orders youth's release from jail after lover says physical relation was consensual

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Karnataka High Court has ordered the release of a 19-year-old boy – sent to prison under judicial custody on the charges of raping a girl, also 19, on the false promise of marriage – after the girl appeared before the court and said their physical relationship was consensual and they were eager to marry.

'Deeply attached'

"The boy and the girl, asserting in unequivocal terms that they were, and continue to remain, deeply attached to one another, are willing to solemnise their relationship in marriage," the court noted in its interim order while staying the criminal proceedings initiated against the boy and his parents on the complaint lodged by the girl, influenced by her family members.

"*Prima facie*, no overt act suggestive of force, coercion, compulsion, or sexual assault is attributable to the boy and the material presently placed before this court would, at least at this stage, indicate nothing more than a consensual relationship between two individuals who have both attained the age of majority," noted Justice M. Nagaprasanna in his June 23 order.

"The circumstance that has brought the boy to incarceration is not one born out of violence, coercion, or predation, but one that emerges from the tender and often turbulent realm of youthful affection," the court noted while pointing out that "what began as a bond of mutual affection between two young adults has, unfortunately, spiralled into criminal proceedings, drawing not merely the boy but even members of his family into the vortex of criminal prosecution".

Familial approval

Criminal law, grave and solemn in its operation, "cannot be permitted to overshadow every relationship that fails to conform to familial approval or societal comfort", the court said. It stated that law must undoubtedly protect the vulnerable, but it must "equally guard against being invoked as an instrument to criminalise consensual affection between consenting adults".

Moreover, the court said that "a young boy of 19 confined within prison walls faces dangers far greater than those that await him outside". On the question of their desire to marry each other, the court said whether such a marriage can legally be allowed now, given the age and related legal issues, would be decided later.

IN THE COURT OF XXVI CITY CIVIL AND SESSION JUDGE AT MAYO HALL, BANGALORE
O.S No. 26104 OF 2024 (CCH-20)
BETWEEN : 1. SRI. SARVESH S/o Shri Narayana Reddy, Aged about 26 years, **2. KUM. PUJITHA** D/o. Shri Krishna Reddy, Aged about 20 Years, Both are Residing at 2-1, Aerekere Village, Samrat Layout, Bangalore - 560076.
...PLAINTIFFS
AND : SRI. MANJUNATH AND ORS
...DEFENDANTS
PUBLIC NOTICE
Service of Summons by paper publication under Order 5 Rule 20(1)A of the Code of Civil Procedure
To, DEFENDANT NO. 8 : SRI. MANU S/o Shri. Prabhakar Reddy, Aged about 24 years,
DEFENDANT NO. 9 : SMT. SWATHI D/o Shri. Prabhakar Reddy, Aged about 22 years, Both are Residing at 2-1, Aerekere Village, Samrat Layout, Bangalore - 560076.
Please take notice that the above Declaration and Injunction suit in respect of the schedule First & Second Property filed by the Plaintiffs is posted **on 16.07.2026** for your appearance before Court at 11.00 A.M. Should you fail to at appear on that day either in person or through duly constituted attorney, the matter will be heard in your absence, and you will be placed ex parte.
PLAINT FIRST SCHEDULE PROPERTY
All that piece and parcel of land bearing S No: 81/2 situate at Arekere Village, Begur Hobli, Bangalore South measuring 10.5 guntas bounded on the:- **East by :** Suryappa's land, **West by :** Road, **North by:** Remaining property in S No: 81/2, **South by:** Road.
PLAINT SECOND SCHEDULE PROPERTY
All that piece and parcel of property bearing BBMP Khatha No: 1366/81/2 in S No: 81/2, situate at Arekere Village, Begur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, measuring East to West 46 feet and North to South 117.2 feet in all measuring 5391 sft out of 11434 sft bounded on the:- **East by :** 81/1 belongs to Suryappa, **West by :** Property of Nagaraj Reddy, **North by :** Remaining Portion of Property No. 81/2, **South by :** Road.
By Order of the Court, Deputy Registrar, City Civil Court, Mayo Hall Unit, Bengaluru
YUKTHA ANIL
402, HTC Aspire, 19 Ali Asker Road, Bangalore-560052.

IN THE COURT OF XXVI CITY CIVIL AND SESSION JUDGE AT MAYO HALL, BANGALORE
O.S No. 26105 OF 2024 (CCH-20)
BETWEEN : 1. SRI. SARVESH S/o Shri Narayana Reddy, Aged about 26 years, **2. KUM. PUJITHA** D/o. Shri Krishna Reddy, Aged about 20 Years, Both are Residing at 2-1, Aerekere Village, Samrat Layout, Bangalore - 560076.
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PLAINT FIRST SCHEDULE PROPERTY
All that piece and parcel of land bearing S No: 81/2 situate at Arekere Village, Begur Hobli, Bangalore South measuring 10.5 guntas bounded on the:- **East by :** Suryappa's land, **West by :** Road **North by :** Remaining property in S No: 81/2, **South by:** Road.
PLAINT SECOND SCHEDULE PROPERTY
All that piece and parcel of property bearing BBMP Khatha No: 1366/81/2 in S No: 81/2, situate at Arekere Village, Begur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, measuring East to West 47 feet and North to South 117 feet in all measuring 5499 sft out of 11434 sft bounded on the:- **East by :** K Manjunath Reddy's Property, **West by :** Road, **North by:** Remaining portion of property, No. 81/2, **South by:** Road.
By Order of the Court, Deputy Registrar, City Civil Court, Mayo Hall Unit, Bengaluru
YUKTHA ANIL
402, HTC Aspire, 19 Ali Asker Road, Bangalore-560052.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified that, my clients have agreed to purchase the Schedule Property from its Owner **Mr.Deepak Pinto** S/o late Mr.John Pinto, residing at Apartment No.T-1, Habitat Serenity Apartments, 27, Viviani Road, Richards Town, Bengaluru-560005. If any persons have any manner of claim, right, title, interest or demand of any nature in or over the Schedule Property, they are hereby requested to file their objections along with the photocopies of the documents on which they are relying, with the undersigned within **10 (Ten) days** from the date of publication of this notice. Objection/s received thereafter will not be binding on my clients.

SCHEDULE

Item No.1: All that piece and parcel of the agricultural dry land measuring **36 Guntas bearing Sy.No.52/1,** situated at **Byadarahalli Village,** Thyamagondlu Hobli, Nelamangala Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District and bounded as follows :

East by : Land bearing Sy.No.53
West by : Land bearing Sy.No.52/2
North by : Road
South by : Land belongs to Sri.G.Ramakrishna

Item No.2: All that piece and parcel of the agricultural dry land measuring **2 Acres 15 Guntas bearing Sy.No.52/2,** situated at **Byadarahalli Village,** Thyamagondlu Hobli, Nelamangala Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District and bounded as follows:

East by : Land bearing Sy.No.52/1
West by : Land bearing Sy.No.52/3
North by : Road
South by : Land belongs to Sri.G.Ramakrishna

Sd/- BAYYA REDDY. M, Advocate
No.101, 4th Floor, Sri Manjunatha Complex,
22nd Main Road, BSK 2nd Stage, Opp : Banashankari
BDA Complex, Bengaluru-560070.

IN THE COURT OF JUDICIAL MAGISTRATE, FIRST CLASS, 'F' COURT AT NEW DISTRICT COURT COMPLEX, MERCES TISWADI GOA

Cri. Case No. IPC 214/2024/F

State (Panaji Goa P.S) .... Complainant
V/s
Shri. B Chalapati .... Accused

FORM No. 4
PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED
[SEE SECTION 82 OF Cr. P.C.]

WHEREAS a complaint has been made before this Court that the Accused: Shri. B Chalapati, S/o. Bychappa, 39 yrs of age, Occupation - Photographer, R/o. H.no 1522, Ground Floor, 5th Main, 11th Cross west of Chord Road, 2nd Stage, Nagapura, Near Shani Temple, Bangalore North, Mahalakshmipuram Layout, Bengaluru, Karnataka, 560086, N/o. H.no 23, Parehosahalli, Kolar, Karnataka, & H.no 252, 5th Cross, Janapriya Apartment Road, Kenchenahalli, Rajarajeshwari Nagar, Bangalore, Karnataka, has committed or is suspected to have committed the offence of punishable under section 380 of IPC. and a warrant of arrest issued by this Court against him has been returned unexecuted and that the said Accused: Shri. B Chalapati, cannot be found and where as it has been shown to my satisfaction that the Accused: Shri. B Chalapati, has absconded. [or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrants.

PROCLAMATION is hereby made that the said Accused: Shri. B Chalapati, S/o. Bychappa, 39 yrs of age, Occupation Photographer, R/o. H.no 1522, Ground Floor, 5th Main, 11th Cross west of Chord Road, 2nd Stage, Nagapura, Near Shani Temple, Bangalore North, Mahalakshmipuram Layout, Bengaluru, Karnataka, 560086, N/o. H.no 23, Parehosahalli, Kolar, Karnataka, & H.no 252, 5th Cross, Janapriya Apartment Road, Kenchenahalli, Rajarajeshwari Nagar, Bangalore, Karnataka, is required to appear before this Court on 10.08.2026 at 2.30 p.m.

Given under my hand and the seal of the Court, this 16th day of June, 2026.

Sd/-
Judicial Magistrate First Class, 'F' Court Merces- Goa

DI/ADVT/751/2026

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

OBITUARY

D.SATHYABHAMA
(w/o Late Sri P.S.Ramachandran)
Passed away peacefully on June 24, 2026
Deeply Mourned by
P.R.Subramanian & Janaki
P.R.Devaraj & Nagalakshmi
Adithya & Niamh
Aishwarya, Soundarya & Shreeya
9841010900 / 9845031283

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Hubballi: 0836 - 2338600
Mangaluru: 0824 - 2417575,
from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Online booking: **www.thehinduads.com**
DONATE EYES - GIFT SIGHT

T.N. Minister claims video showed him crushing child's tablet, not drugs

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Minister for Human Resources Management D. Sarathkumar on Friday denied allegations circulating on social media that a viral video from an Indian Premier League (IPL) match showed him allegedly preparing to snort drugs. The video showed him using a credit or debit card to make a powder line with a white substance placed on a mobile phone screen.

Addressing the media, he said the video was recorded about two years ago, and had resurfaced now with "rumours".

'False impression'

Mr. Sarathkumar said the clip showed him crushing a tablet for his one-and-a-half-year-old child, after his wife had told him that the child was refusing to take the tablet and was spitting it out. The Minister said they crushed the tablet and mixed the powder with a liquid to make it easier for the child to consume it.

Social media

The Minister alleged that the video had been selectively shared on social media to create a false impression that he was handling drugs. "The video has been wrongly interpreted. Those who were present with me know what had actually happened," he said.

No decision on low-alcohol drinks yet: Kerala Minister

Decision on selling such beverages in Kerala will be based solely on the liquor policy, which is yet to be prepared; CM has clearly stated his stance on the issue, says Excise Minister M. Liju

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The decision on selling low-alcohol beverages in Kerala will be based solely on the liquor policy, which is yet to be prepared, Excise Minister M. Liju has said. Addressing a press conference in Thiruvananthapuram on Friday, he said that the Budget proposal for tax cuts on low-alcohol beverages was considering this future possibility, and not a decision to be implemented immediately.

"As per the information available to me, only after the UDF government comes out with a comprehensive liquor policy will a final decision on the sales of low-alcohol beverages be taken," he said.

Decision pending: M. Liju says V.D. Satheesan has stated that the tax cuts are not for immediate sales. NIRMAL HARINDRAN

Chief Minister V.D. Satheesan has clearly stated that the tax cuts are not for immediate sales, but that these will be the slabs when the sales happen in the future after the liquor policy comes into force, Mr. Liju added.

He said that before the sales of low-alcohol beverages can take place, the brand registration application has to go through the Excise Commissioner.

"As the Excise Minister, my stand right now is that such applications should be rejected. However, if the required changes are made in the liquor policy, then it can be allowed," he said.

Mr. Liju said that the idea of low-alcohol beverages was first introduced by the previous Left Democratic Front (LDF) government through the liquor policy of 2022, following which the Abkari Rules were amended as per a government order in 2023.

To a question on whether he was unaware of the tax cut proposal in the Budget, he said that it is usually not a practice for Finance Ministers to discuss the tax proposals with the respective Ministers.

Andhra Pradesh plans re-auction of Ramagiri gold blocks in Anantapur

Sambasiva Rao M.
AMARAVATI

The Andhra Pradesh government is preparing to re-auction the Ramagiri North and Ramagiri South Gold Blocks in Ananthapuramu district of Rayalaseema region, with a notice inviting tender (NIT) proposed to be issued in July, Mukesh Kumar Meena, Principal Secretary, Mines Department, told *The Hindu*.

The two gold-bearing blocks, located in Ramagiri mandal, cover a total area of 2,000 hectares, comprising 1,000 hectares each in the Ramagiri North and Ramagiri South sectors.

Historical records

The blocks are being offered under a composite licence (CL) and have been explored up to the G4 reconnaissance level by Mineral Exploration, Research and Innovation Trust (MERIT).

The Ramagiri Gold Field has a long mining history dating back to ancient times. Modern commercial mining was undertaken between 1905 and 1925 by companies managed by John Taylor and Sons of London.

During that period, the Chennabhavi Mines produced 1,36,633 ounces of gold from 2.21 lakh tonnes of ore, while Jibutil Gold Mines yielded 39,116 ounces from 1.40 lakh tonnes of ore.

The region later came under the ambit of Bharat Gold Mines Limited (BGML), the Union government undertaking that operated the Kolar Gold Fields (KGF).

However, BGML's operations were closed in 2001. Geological experts regard the Ramagiri Greenstone Belt as one of the significant gold-bearing belts of the Eastern Dharwar Craton, comparable to the Kolar, Hutti and Veligallu gold belts.

MDMK's general body to decide on alliance today

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

With speculation rife that the Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (MDMK) will join the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK)-led alliance, MDMK chief Vaiko on Friday convened the party's high-level committee to decide on switching alliances.

The final announcement on moving away from the DMK-led front will be made on Saturday after a meeting of the MDMK general body in Chennai.

There are expectations that the MDMK may ask its two MLAs – T.M. Rajendran (Kadayanallur) and Senthil Selvan (Sirkazhi) – to resign from the membership of the Assembly as they had contested on the DMK's 'Rising Sun' symbol in the 2026 election.

But Mr. Senthil Selvan has reportedly decided to stay on as an MLA.

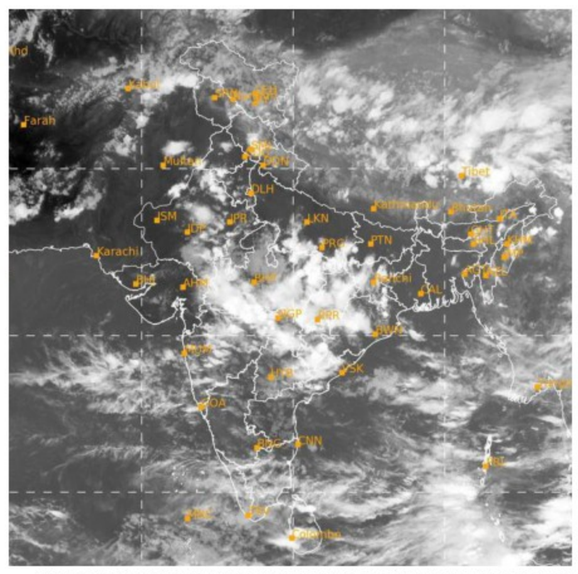
The MDMK joined the DMK-led alliance in 2017, and has stayed in the coalition for four elections: the 2019 and 2024 Lok Sabha elections and the 2021 and 2026 Assembly elections. Except in 2024, its candidates contested on the DMK symbol.

In the 2024 election, Mr. Vaiko's son Durai Vaiko contested on a separate symbol and won from Tiruchi.

The issue of the party contesting on its own symbol persisted in the 2026 Assembly election, too, but the MDMK eventually fielded its candidates on DMK ticket.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: AQICN/CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.45 HRS)

Forecast for Saturday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Sikkim, West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Konkan & Goa, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karaikal, Kerala and Mahe. Heat wave conditions likely at isolated places over Uttar Pradesh

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	0.8	33.7	26.1	Kurnool	3.1	34.6	26.7
Ahmedabad	—	40.7	29.3	Lucknow	—	42.4	30.4
Aizawl	0.1	29.2	23.0	Madurai	—	39.0	26.6
Bengaluru	—	30.7	21.3	Mangaluru	18.6	31.3	24.0
Bhopal	—	33.8	22.2	Mumbai	—	33.6	25.8
Bhubaneswar	2.5	38.3	27.8	Mysuru	—	30.4	20.2
Chandigarh	—	40.2	26.3	New Delhi	—	41.5	28.7
Chennai	2.4	38.0	27.6	Patna	—	39.0	28.8
Coimbatore	—	33.2	23.0	Port Blair	9.9	31.0	26.0
Dehradun	—	36.8	25.3	Prayagraj	—	42.0	29.5
Gangtok	14	25.6	18.6	Puducherry	4.2	38.3	27.4
Goa	19.6	33.0	23.8	Pune	—	34.3	22.9
Guwahati	—	34.4	27.4	Raipur	—	37.6	27.4
Hubballi	—	30.0	23.0	Ranchi	—	32.5	24.1
Hyderabad	—	31.2	25.4	Shillong	—	24.8	17.0
Imphal	—	32.1	22.3	Shimla	—	28.2	20.0
Jaipur	16.4	38.7	26.6	Srinagar	—	32.4	18.0
Kochi	10.8	30.4	26.0	Thiruvananthapuram	3	30.4	25.2
Kohima	—	26.0	20.0	Tiruchirappalli	—	36.7	27.4
Kolkata	21.8	35.1	25.4	Vijayawada	—	37.0	28.5
Kozhikode	12.3	32.4	25.6	Visakhapatnam	—	33.9	29.4

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bengaluru	—	—	—	—	—	—
Chennai	—	—	—	—	—	—
Delhi	4	14	10	139	194	
Hyderabad	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kolkata	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lucknow	—	—	—	—	—	—
Mumbai	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pune	—	—	—	—	—	—
Visakhapatnam	—	—	—	—	—	—

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Modinagar, Uttar Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 259 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Aizawl, Mizoram recorded a healthy AQI score of 18

Air Quality Code: Poor | Moderate | Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

INBRIEF

Sanjay Jaju appointed next Chief Secretary of Telangana

Senior bureaucrat Sanjay Jaju, who has been repatriated from the Central services a few days ago, will be the next Chief Secretary of Telangana. The government said Mr. Jaju would hold full additional charge (FAC) as Special Chief Secretary to Industries & Commerce; Information Technology; CEO of the Industry & Investment Cell in Chief Minister's Office and Smart Proactive, Efficient and Effectively Delivery. He will take over the charge from chief secretary K. Ramakrishna Rao who is retiring from service on June 30.

Youth ends life, family alleges custodial torture

The family members of Veedhi Naveen Kumar, 26, staged a protest at Dharna Chowk on Friday, alleging that he ended his life due to custodial torture at Akiveedu police station in West Godavari district. The police summoned Naveen Kumar in a family dispute case filed by his wife, and allegedly beat him up. The victim consumed poison on May 11, and died while undergoing treatment in a private hospital, the family members alleged. Police did not respond to the queries seeking clarification on the case.

(People in distress can 'Dial 100' for assistance.)

Inter-State paddy transport racket surfaces in Telangana

An inter-State paddy transportation racket has surfaced in Telangana's Peddapalli district where large quantities of paddy were brought illegally from Maharashtra and other districts and passed off as locally procured produce through the Mallepalli Paddy Procurement Centre. The scam came to light after the Secretary of the Primary Agricultural Cooperative Society, Manthani, M. Ashok Kumar, lodged a police complaint on Thursday alleging manipulation of procurement records and fraud at the Mallepalli PPC.

Muharram rituals

Sacred procession: The procession with the Bibi-Ka-Alam passes through Charminar in the old city of Hyderabad on the 10th day of Muharram on Friday. G. RAMAKRISHNA

ASI discovers 25 rare inscriptions in A.P.

N.S. Chowdary
MARKAPURAM

An expert team from the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has deciphered some of the rare inscriptions found in the Nallamala forest region during a three-day visit this month. The ASI team took estampages of 25 inscriptions dating from the 2nd century to the 15th century between June 11 and 13, 2026, and is now in the process of digitising those inscriptions in several languages.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, ASI Director (Epigraphy) from Mysuru, K. Muniratnam Reddy, said, "We have copied 25 inscriptions during the adventurous epigraphical survey across Ponnalabailu, Puttabadi, Palutla, and other villages in the Markapuram district. In Ponnalabailu village, the Palankesvara inscription (engraved on both sides) was written in the Telugu language, dating to 1404 C.E."

"This inscription records the gift of several wet and dry lands in the villages of Golankapuram and Palutla to Kumara Siddasankaradeva Ayyangar, a pontiff of Palanka, by Manmahamandalesvara Anumayadeva, for conducting worship and providing food offerings to Lord Palankesvaradeva for the merit of his father, Ramaraju, and for the prosperity of himself, his children, and his siblings," he informed.

"Furthermore, it records the renovation of the Bhairava temple in Chintakunta," he said.

TTD to launch two services focused on children from July

A.D. Rangarajan
TIRUPATI

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) has announced two services – 'Akshara Govindam' and 'Annaprasana' – from July 3 at the Sri Vakula Matha temple at Peruru on the outskirts of Tirupati.

According to mythology, Lord Venkateswara is considered the foster son of Vakula Matha, and as such the temple has become synonymous to care and compassion towards one's wards.

Children aged three to five can take part in 'Akshara Govindam', under which service they will be initiated into the world of learning. The children will be given *prasadam* and a complimentary kit containing educational and devotional items.

The 'Annaprasana' ceremony, under which a child is offered solid food for the first time, will be performed under the guidance of temple priests.

After its formal launch on July 3, the services will be available on all days (except Tuesdays). Two batches of 25 children each will be allowed.

Registration is mandatory one hour ahead of the ceremony at the temple.

'Marriage proposal' leads to ₹1.46 crore cyberfraud; four arrested in Telangana

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

What began as a marriage proposal on a matrimonial website ended in a ₹1.46 crore cyberfraud, with the victim being persuaded to invest in a fake trading platform before the money was siphoned off through mule bank accounts and routed to Singapore-based fraudsters.

The Hyderabad Cyber Crime police arrested four persons from Siddipet and Secunderabad in Telangana in connection with the case.

According to investigators, the fraudsters created a fake profile of a woman on a matrimony platform, gained the victim's trust by promising marriage, and gradually convinced him to invest in an online investment scheme.

The victim was allegedly shown fabricated profits on the platform and he transferred ₹46.65 lakh through multiple transactions. When he attempted to withdraw the money, the fraudsters demanded additional payments and eventually blocked all communication, prompting the victim to approach the police.

During the investigation, officers found that the money trail extended across Telangana and Maharashtra through multiple mule bank accounts, including accounts maintained with Indian Overseas Bank. The police said at least ₹35 lakh of the cheated amount was routed through multiple mule bank accounts these accounts before being transferred further through hawala channels to fraudsters based in Singapore.

With the help of a fake profile, the accused convinced the man to invest in an online scheme.

Investigators alleged that one of the accused worked under the instructions of an absconding handler and managed mule bank accounts used to move the fraud proceeds, receiving a 30% commission.

Another accused allegedly helped open and operate mule accounts, facilitated withdrawals and received a 15% commission. Other two accused allegedly performed similar roles, each receiving a 10% commission.

Tragic evening

Venezuela's quake holds lessons on the importance of preparedness

On Wednesday two earthquakes, of magnitudes 7.1 and 7.5, struck seconds apart, levelling large parts of Caracas, Venezuela. On Friday, the acting President, Delcy Rodríguez, put the dead at 589 and the injured at 2,980. In La Guaira, the worst-hit State, over a hundred buildings crumpled to rubble. Geologically speaking, such destruction is, in Venezuela, an aberration. The country sits where the South American and Caribbean plates grind past one another, a boundary that slips sideways rather than thrusting upward – unlike the frequent quakes along the Pacific's Ring of Fire. Strain here accumulates quietly, over generations, before the ground settles its accounts in a single afternoon. It is early days, but seismologists have explained the twin quakes as a 'doublet,' what the US Geological Survey (USGS) calls a "complex rupture-interaction". Northern Venezuela saw a smaller doublet last year; the Türkiye-Syria earthquakes of 2023, which killed over 55,000 people, were of the same provenance. Their shallowness – under 30 kilometres – drove the fury straight into the streets above. The USGS has flagged a plausible toll exceeding 10,000, and the past is proof that such fears are likely to bear out rather than be refuted.

India, which has already offered help, should make relief its first duty – search teams, medical supplies, and the unglamorous logistics of a disaster zone. But there is a lesson here that it ought not to file away and forget. This year the Bureau of Indian Standards withdrew a decade's worth of commissioned work that found seismic hazard along the Himalayan front badly underestimated – a revision that nearly doubled design forces in the highest zones and added a sixth zone to a map that stopped at five. It was shelved after a Cabinet Secretariat order warned the standards "materially affected" ongoing infrastructure, metro projects among them. India's Zone V still designs for 0.36g, where g measures for how much the ground can shake. Pakistan and Nepal, on the same colliding front, reckon on nearly 0.75g, the United States and Japan on a full g or more. Nearly 79% of Indians live under moderate to severe seismic threat, and 95% of earthquake deaths occur in the one- to three-storey houses that no code ever reaches. Venezuela is a portent of the implicit danger that exists. The science of prediction will remain, for the foreseeable future, hope filling the gaps of uncertainty. What can be done is build structures that hold and keep their inhabitants safe. The earth follows its rhythm; the only choice is whether or not to be ready.

Whites on green

Wimbledon is keeping up with the changing times

No tournament marries old world charm with new age freshness quite like Wimbledon. This will be on display yet again when the year's third Major gets underway on Monday. If the pristine grass courts and all-white attire are reminders of tennis's origins and traditions, the introduction of video review technology from 2026 is the latest example of the event marching with the times. Another throwback to the old days will be the return of Serena Williams, a seven-time singles champion at the All England Club. She is 44, and has not played competitively in nearly four years, but appears leaner and fitter, thanks in large measure to modern-day weight-reduction medication. The legendary American is a wildcard entrant in doubles as well, where she will partner her illustrious sister and five-time Wimbledon singles winner Venus, with the duo looking for their seventh doubles crown at SW19. But unranked as Serena is, the probability of meeting high-profile opponents from the get-go is high. Women's tennis is also a crowded market-place, with as many as five Slam champions and three others with runner-up finishes among the top-10 seeds. Chief among them are World No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka, 2022 winner Elena Rybakina, defending champion Iga Swiatek and the teenaged Mirra Andreeva, who clinched her maiden Major at Roland-Garros recently.

The men's section will be equally intriguing. Carlos Alcaraz, a two-time Wimbledon titlist and a fan-favourite in south-west London, is absent because of a wrist injury. Reigning champion Jannik Sinner suffered a dispiriting second-round loss at the French Open and has had no competitive matches since then. The defeat in Paris came under extremely hot conditions, and with western Europe in the midst of a heatwave, it will be interesting to see how the Italian World No. 1 copes. Second seed Alexander Zverev will look to cash in, like he did at Roland-Garros, but grass is his weakest surface. This presents Novak Djokovic with his best chance to claim a record-extending 25th Slam. At 39, the lush green lawn is where the Serb is most comfortable. With four trophies, two finals and one semifinal appearance in his last seven visits to Wimbledon, he is also the most pedigreed. However, for a second straight Major, there is likely to be an unpleasant backdrop with leading players set to expand their protest at what they deem as an inadequate increase in prize money (less than 22% of the tournament revenue). Actions at the biggest competitions do garner attention but they also benefit the elite players more than the rank and file. Tennis needs an equitable solution for the betterment of all. If the argument of the top players is that the organisers keep most of the revenue, then it can also be said that they earn disproportionately more than their lower-ranked peers. The gap between the haves and have-nots is only widening.

The cracks beneath the peddled story of India's growth

D. Raja

General Secretary, Communist Party of India (CPI)

For over a decade, the Narendra Modi government has projected India as the world's fastest-growing major economy, an emerging manufacturing hub, a Vishwaguru, a global power, a preferred destination for global capital, and a Viksit Bharat on track for 2047. Yet, behind this carefully crafted narrative lies a more troubling reality. The economy faces multiple external shocks while carrying deep structural weaknesses that threaten its long-term prospects.

The warning signs are unmistakable. But instead of addressing them, the ruling establishment appears more focused on manufactured controversies, communal polarisation and divisive politics. As television studios debate temples, mosques, medieval rulers and invented enemies, the economy's foundations continue to weaken.

Imported energy, growing risks

The most immediate challenge is India's growing vulnerability to external shocks. The country imports nearly 90% of its crude oil and about half of its natural gas requirements. Every rise in global energy prices is quickly transmitted to the domestic economy. The recent rise in fuel prices underscores a stark reality: despite the rhetoric of renewable energy, self-reliance and global leadership, India remains heavily dependent on imported energy.

The consequences are severe. Rising oil and liquefied natural gas prices widen the trade deficit, weaken the rupee and raise production costs across the economy. In FY2025-26, the Reserve Bank of India sold over $53 billion in the foreign exchange market to support the rupee – its largest intervention in more than a decade. Foreign exchange reserves have fallen from over $720 billion to around $681 billion. An economy with strong fundamentals should not have to spend such vast sums merely to slow its currency's decline. The issue is politically significant as well. Narendra Modi, as Gujarat Chief Minister, often linked the rupee's value to national pride. Today, despite that rhetoric, the rupee has fallen to a historic low of about ₹95 against the U.S. dollar.

Compounding the problem is the uncertainty surrounding fertilizers and agriculture. Again, India's apparent strength in manufacturing fertilizers masks a dangerous vulnerability. Domestic urea production depends heavily on imported LNG. Almost all the fertilizers India produce are linked to heavy imports such as LNG and potash. Any disruption in global gas supplies, any sharp increase in LNG prices or supply chain disruption immediately threatens fertilizer availability and affordability.

The challenge is compounded by the monsoon outlook. A weak monsoon affects far more than agriculture. Lower crop yields reduce rural incomes, weaken consumption, fuel food inflation. They also increase the need for government spending on relief, procurement and subsidies, which is unlikely under the Bharatiya Janata Party's rule. These risks reinforce one another. Rising fuel costs, expensive fertilizers and a weak monsoon together create a vicious cycle that suppresses demand when the economy needs stronger domestic consumption.

> Behind the government's carefully crafted narrative, India's economic vulnerabilities continue to deepen

Weakening rural safety nets

A responsible government would respond by strengthening employment guarantees and social protection. Instead, the Modi government abolished the Planning Commission and has steadily weakened MGNREGA, one of the country's most effective rural safety nets. As a result, millions of rural households now face greater economic uncertainty with fewer protections than they had a decade ago.

Beyond these immediate pressures lies a deeper structural concern. India's external sector remains heavily dependent on services exports and remittances. The record $135 billion in remittances received in FY2024-25 has been a key factor in financing the current account deficit.

Even this strength carries a warning. Increasingly, India's remittances come not from migrant workers in West Asia but from highly skilled professionals in the United States, the United Kingdom and other advanced economies. The rise of right-wing politics and anti-immigration sentiment – championed by leaders such as U.S. President Donald Trump and echoed across much of the West – poses a growing threat to this model. At the same time, artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming software, data processing and other professional services in which Indian workers have traditionally excelled.

The danger is not that remittances will disappear overnight, but that one of the pillars supporting India's external balance could gradually weaken. If remittance growth slows while energy imports remain high, pressure on the current account and the rupee will intensify.

International investors are already turning cautious. Foreign portfolio investors have withdrawn over ₹2.2 lakh crore from Indian equities this year, while India has slipped from sixth to seventh in global market-capitalisation rankings. Domestic retail investors have limited the damage, but the message is clear: global investors are becoming less convinced by India's growth story.

Even more worrying is India's position in the technological transformation currently reshaping the global economy. Mr. Modi's hollow guarantees have not only weakened what was built earlier but also his diversionary politics has prevented a discussion on what the future would be like and what India's role in it would be.

The 21st century will be defined by AI, semiconductors, advanced manufacturing, robotics and frontier science. Yet, India remains largely absent from these strategic sectors. Although the country has a vibrant startup ecosystem, much of it is concentrated in digital intermediation rather than technological innovation. Food delivery, ride-hailing and quick-commerce platforms may create high valuations, but they do not build technological sovereignty. Many of India's celebrated startups still depend on organising abundant low-cost labour through digital platforms rather than developing globally competitive technologies.

The contrast with global leaders here is striking. Taiwan dominates advanced semiconductor manufacturing through TSMC. South Korea commands critical positions through Samsung. The U.S. and China lead in AI, advanced chips and foundational technologies. India possesses immense engineering talent but remains heavily dependent on imported semiconductors, imported technology and imported capital equipment. Despite years of slogans about innovation and self-reliance, the country remains a marginal player in the industries that will define the future.

Scant transformation

This is perhaps the most serious indictment of the Modi decade. The promised manufacturing revolution has not materialised. The demographic dividend remains unutilised. Millions of young people continue to confront precarious employment, stagnant wages and shrinking opportunities.

Every failure has been passed on to ordinary people with a dose of hyper-nationalism. Wealth and opportunity continue to concentrate in fewer hands. The burden is socialised; the benefits are privatised.

Electoral victories should not be mistaken for economic success. A government can win elections while pursuing policies that weaken the long-term foundations of economic development.

The tragedy of contemporary India is that while the economy sends increasingly urgent distress signals, public attention is repeatedly diverted towards communal polarisation and manufactured controversies. Citizens are encouraged to fear one another rather than question policies that affect their livelihoods.

India possesses the resources, talent and productive capacity to chart a different path. But doing so requires confronting the policies that have brought the country to this point. It requires defending public investment, strengthening social protection, rebuilding employment generation, investing in science and technology, reducing external dependence and restoring economic priorities to the centre of public life.

Above all, it requires a resolute and united struggle against policies that enrich a few corporates while burdening millions with poverty. The choice before the country is stark: continue down the present path of division and economic fragility, or build a broad democratic movement with left-of-centre economics, capable of defending livelihoods, jobs and the future itself. The time to wake up is now, before it is too late.

India-New Zealand FTA, a modern trade partnership

Aditya Nadkarni

Director, Indirect Tax, Nexdigm

Snehal Gadhave

Senior Manager, Indirect Tax, Nexdigm

For years, trade between India and New Zealand has been a relationship with untapped potential. The two economies have remained friendly partners, yet commercial engagement has never quite matched the opportunities available. Trade remains relatively modest. The bilateral merchandise trade stood at $1.3 billion (approximately) in FY 2024-25, of which India's exports to New Zealand accounted for only around $711 million, despite registering 32% year-on-year growth. The numbers are moving in the right direction, but remain small when compared to India's trade relationships with larger partners. The proposed India-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (FTA) could change that equation as it attempts to create conditions for faster bilateral growth.

At first glance, the headlines are easy to focus on – zero-duty access for Indian exports, wider market access for services, and a proposed investment commitment of $20 billion over the next 15 years. These are important outcomes. The larger story, however, is that the agreement reflects the evolving nature of trade partnerships.

Modern trade beyond tariffs

Modern FTAs are no longer just about lowering customs duties. Businesses today are equally concerned about how quickly goods move through ports, how easily certifications are recognised, whether regulations are predictable, and how much compliance effort is required to access preferential treatment. In many industries, these factors influence competitiveness as much as tariffs.

For Indian exports, New Zealand has extended duty-free access across 100% of its tariff lines. However, for businesses, particularly in labour-intensive sectors such as textiles, apparel, leather, and handicrafts, this is not merely a removal of duties that had earlier reached to 10%, but a clear pricing advantage in a market otherwise dominated by established FTA partners. In a market where competing exporters already enjoy preferential access, even a single-digit tariff advantage can influence purchasing decisions.

> It is a strategic trade pact with long-term economic potential

On the other hand, India's approach is cautious. Sensitive sectors such as dairy have remained protected, reflecting a policy preference that has become increasingly visible in India's recent trade negotiations. The objective is clear: open and explore new opportunities without exposing vulnerable domestic industries to competitors.

Services could emerge as one of the most significant beneficiaries over the longer term. Indian businesses have strong capabilities in technology, consulting, engineering, health care, and education services. Greater market access along with clearer mobility provisions for professionals and students can make it easier for Indian firms to expand their presence in New Zealand. For a country where services account for an increasing share of economic output, these provisions deserve as much attention as tariff concessions.

Compliance unlocks trade benefits

One more feature that businesses should watch closely is the Rules of Origin (RoO) framework. Preferential access under an FTA is never automatic. Companies must demonstrate that products meet prescribed origin requirements before claiming lower duties. The India-New Zealand agreement incorporates detailed product-specific rules, documentation requirements, and traceability measures to prevent misuse through transshipment.

From a policy standpoint, this strengthens the integrity of the agreement, while from a business standpoint; it raises the importance of supply chain visibility and compliance readiness.

The same principle applies to trade facilitation measures included in the pact. Faster customs clearances, digital certification systems, and simplified procedures often deliver tangible commercial benefits. Reduced delays can reduce inventory costs, improve cash flow, and create greater certainty across supply chains.

This agreement also aims to address non-tariff barriers, particularly in sectors where regulatory approvals often matter more than tariffs. Industries such as pharmaceuticals, food processing, chemicals, and agriculture could gain benefits if regulatory processes are streamlined and more predictable.

Preparing businesses for FTAs

Viewed more broadly, the agreement marks another step in India's transition towards a facilitation-led trade policy, where businesses enhance competitiveness not only through lower tariffs but also through reduced transaction costs, faster market access, and greater certainty across the trade ecosystem.

From a business perspective, the real opportunity lies not merely in availing lower duties but also in integrating operational, sourcing, and compliance functions with the framework of the agreement. Today, preferential access increasingly depends on demonstrable compliance, traceability, and process discipline. Given this, businesses should proactively review Harmonised System (HS) classifications, evaluate eligibility under the RoO framework, strengthen supply-chain documentation, identify sector-specific export opportunities, and reassess landed-cost models to maximise the commercial advantages offered under the agreement.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Passport and citizenship

As in the Passports Act, 1967, a passport is defined as a travel document intended to regulate the departure from India of citizens and others.

However, the practice of issuing passports that indicate the holder's nationality, often without thorough authentication or verification, raises serious concerns about administrative responsibility. This issue is not confined to passports alone. The authorities responsible for issuing a ration card, Aadhaar card, PAN card, and voter ID card also routinely record nationality details without adequate verification. Such practices could be seen as a dereliction of duty, particularly given the substantial public funds allocated to these processes.

The question that arises is: where does the fault lie? Is it with government authorities or with the people? This issue deserves urgent legal and public scrutiny.

A. Mariafrancis,
Chennai

A passport in India is not issued casually. If the state itself has carried out these stringent checks, questioning a person's citizenship later creates a contradiction.

Many Indians, especially those from older generations, may not have preserved their birth certificates or ancestral records. For them, a passport is often the highest official proof of identity and nationality they possess. If even that is open to doubt, proving citizenship becomes significantly more difficult.

The controversy comes amid the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls and ongoing citizenship verification exercises. A sovereign state must ensure that the documents it issues inspire certainty and public confidence. If a passport cannot conclusively establish citizenship, the government owes citizens a clear and straightforward explanation.

Gregory Fernandes,
Mumbai

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

Fire personnel conduct a dousing operation at the commercial building in Aliganj, Lucknow. PTI

The rules that failed 15 lives in Lucknow

On June 22, a fire broke out in a building in Uttar Pradesh's capital city, claiming 15 lives, most of them students and staff of an animation centre. According to eyewitnesses, bystanders, and survivors, the building lacked basic fire safety systems. **Mayank Kumar** reports on the tragedy and the regulatory gaps it exposes amid rapid urbanisation in India's most populous State

For 26-year-old Rishabh Mishra, the images of the afternoon of June 22 will always haunt him – people jumping from a burning building or clinging to live wires in an attempt to survive. One in particular refuses to fade: a man pleading from a window, his face flushed and his eyes desperately seeking help as flames raged behind him.

It was around 2:30 p.m. when Mishra, a bystander, noticed the fire in a three-storey commercial building in Sector D in Aliganj, Lucknow. The building housed a pet shop and a clinic on the ground and first floor, a video gaming zone and 3D art and design animation centre named Head Hoppers Studio on the second floor, and an IT networking office on the third floor.

Mishra says he immediately swung into action. "I made two trips to the King George's Medical University (KGMU) – once by car and once by ambulance – ferrying injured people," he says.

Despite having gone to the hospital twice, a visibly exhausted Mishra cannot recall the route when he gets ready to go the third time, this time on his bike. "I was just focused on getting people there. I didn't notice the way," he says. Taking a sip of water from a bottle for the first time after nearly three hours, he asks a police constable how to get to the premier medical institute, 5 kilometres away.

The fire claimed 15 lives, most of them students and staff of the animation centre, while nine others sustained injuries and were admitted to the KGMU Trauma Centre. As per the the postmortem reports, the 15 of them did not have major burn injuries; they suffocated to death.

On the same day, the Uttar Pradesh government formed a two-member Special Investigation Team to conduct an impartial and time-bound investigation into the fire incident. The team has been instructed to submit its report within seven days.

The Lucknow fire is yet another addition to India's summer of fire tragedies. Early this month, a fire in a bed-and-breakfast took the lives of 23 people in South Delhi's Malviya Nagar; last month, nine people were killed in a major fire which broke out at a residential building in Shahdara in East Delhi. In all these incidents, violations of safety guidelines and administrative negligence have been the causes.

No room to escape

A First Information Report filed by the Uttar Pradesh police says that a short circuit may have originated in the air conditioning duct on the first floor or the pet shop located on the ground floor.

According to Abhishek Pandey, an eyewitness who tried to enter the building but was forced to retreat due to the clouds of smoke, the fire spread rapidly across the upper floors. "There were no emergency exits. The only staircase in the building was obstructed by the thick smoke. Some people took refuge in washrooms to evade the fire," says Pandey.

> There were no emergency exits. The only staircase in the building was obstructed by thick smoke
>
> **ABHISHEK PANDEY**
> Eyewitness

A survivor says the digital lock of the animation centre was non-functional amid a power shortage. This left students and staff trapped. He adds that the route to the roof was blocked, forcing some people to leap in panic from windows.

Pandey says it took firefighters at least 30 minutes to reach the spot. "Firefighters, police, and SDRF (State Disaster Response Force) personnel arrived to discover that there was no space for evacuation. Unable to access the main entrances, rescue teams had to breach the walls of the building to extract bodies," he says. Nineteen firefighting vehicles extinguished the fire in about four hours, according to records of the Lucknow Fire and Emergency Services accessed by *The Hindu*.

Anamika Samanta, an animation artist with three years of experience at Head Hoppers Studio, and Nilesh Kumar were among the 15 people who died in the fire. The two of them were in love and were engaged to be married.

Anamika's father, Vishwanath Samanta, who lives in West Bengal, is devastated. While collecting her body from the post-mortem facility at KGMU, he wails in anguish. "Our family is shattered," he says, adding that his wife repeatedly fainted on hearing the news.

Nilesh's family is distraught too, he says. "We had visited his house 2-3 times earlier," says Samanta. "We had also met his parents."

He last spoke to his daughter on the morning of the incident. "She told me, 'I am going to work now.' That is the last time I heard her voice."

Sagar, a 3D artist in training at the institute, was another victim. His friend Rahul Singh rushed to Aliganj after receiving a call from a mutual friend. "Sagar had called my friend and begged him to save him. I reached the spot in 15 minutes, but I could not enter the studio," he says. "I pleaded with the authorities to drag my friend out. But they told us that they were unable to access the main entrances. Rescue teams had to enter the building from neighbouring buildings to pull out trapped victims. That took a lot of time. Precious time was wasted and my friend died," says Singh, bursting into tears at the entrance of the post-mortem house in Lucknow.

A man breaks down on hearing the news about a loved one's death. ANI

The Aliganj pet shop and clinic sold pet food, accessories, and habitat supplies and also provided medical and surgical care for pets. It advised owners on the right food and products based on their pets' breed and age. At least 25 pets, including cats and dogs, were inside the shop when the fire broke out.

"When we received information about the fire on our helpline, our seven-member team reached the spot within 20 minutes. Many animal lovers also gathered at the fire site," says Shubham Pratap Singh, a member of Jeev Aashraya Foundation, a Lucknow-based NGO that rescues and rehabilitates pet animals. "We pushed for the immediate rescue of pets as cats and dogs are vulnerable to fire disasters due to their inability to adjust to high temperatures. After our efforts, more than 10 cats and dogs were handed over to us. We kept them for a few hours in the house of a man called Vishal Melhotra, who allowed us to use the AC in his house as well. Sadly, some cats who were on the first floor died in the fire."

Flouting rules

The building where the fire broke out was being used for commercial purposes even though it had been approved by the Lucknow Development Authority (LDA) only for residential use, show the Lucknow Fire and Emergency Services records. According to the FIR, the building also lacked basic fire safety measures, including emergency exits, smoke ventilation systems, fire extinguishers, and other fire protection features.

The building, spread over about 1,992 square feet, was owned by Virendra Pratap Shukla and Surendra Pratap Shukla from January 2013. The LDA approved a residential building plan for the property in 2014 under its self-certification scheme, under which a licensed architect or engineer certifies that the building plan complies with local building bylaws. However, officials later found unauthorised construction on the premises and registered a case against Virendra Pratap Shukla in 2016. Following an investigation, the LDA ordered the illegal portions to be demolished on May 10, 2016, but revoked the order less than two months later, on July 5, raising questions about why the decision was reversed.

An enquiry by the LDA into the incident found 18 officials and engineers of the Authority, many of them retired now, guilty of regulatory lapses linked to the building.

So far, four people – Virendra Pratap Shukla, the owner; and Suresh Kumar Sahu, Ramkrishna Upadhyay, and Tushak Krishna Jaiswal, all of them tenants occupying different floors of the building – have been arrested. They were booked under Sections 105 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder), 110 (attempt to commit culpable homicide), and 125 (rash or negligent act endangering human life) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, and provisions of the Uttar Pradesh Fire and Emergency Services Act, 2022. Four officials – Gaurav Kumar, Executive Engineer (Collection), Jankipuram; Kamlendra Kumar Singh, Fire Station Second Officer, Indira Nagar; Anil Kumar, Assistant Engineer; and Pramod Pandey, Junior Engineer – have been suspended.

Singh issued a statement accusing higher officers of making him a scapegoat and demanded that Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath fix accountability on the Lucknow chief fire officer for the lapses linked to the incident. He sought a review of the disciplinary action taken against him. Later, he retracted his statement.

Inspection drive

Following the fire, the LDA launched a citywide inspection drive on June 23 to identify and take action against buildings and establishments operating in violation of safety and building regulations. They sealed 71 establishments and issued notices to 83 building owners/managers on the first day of inspection.

An LDA official said, "This campaign, conducted on the instructions of LDA Vice President Prathamesh Kumar, in collaboration with a joint team of the fire department and the Lucknow police, has targeted dozens of coaching centres, libraries, dance studios, playgroup schools, blood banks, computer institutes, nursing homes, hotels, commercial complexes, and other establishments." Officials also took similar action in other parts of the State. They say they will carry out the campaign for three weeks.

The U.P. government also directed all the District Magistrates to conduct a comprehensive survey of all the coaching institutes operating in their respective districts to ensure compliance with safety standards. The inspection includes aspects such as building arrangements, fire safety, electrical safety, and other necessary facilities.

Yogendra Upadhyay, Higher Education Minister in the State government, said in an official statement, "All District Magistrates have been directed to conduct a comprehensive survey of all coaching institutes operating in their respective districts and prepare a list. Strict action, as per rules, is being ensured against institutions that are not registered under the Uttar Pradesh Coaching Regulation Act, 2002.... Any kind of irregularity or negligence will not be tolerated."

The opposition Samajwadi Party (SP) criticised the government and administrative authorities. "The safety of students and citizens is paramount. But initiating a sudden drive after such a tragedy... shows an attempt to hide failure and corruption," said Udai Veer Singh, an SP spokesperson. "Safety shouldn't be compromised. Why was the government asleep for the past 10 years? Where did the government get so much staff in a single day to issue notices to thousands of people across the State after conducting inspections?"

Singh said a massive fire in April had damaged a labourers' settlement near Sector-12 in Vikas Nagar, Lucknow. "We had demanded strict implementation of safety protocols then too, but no action was taken," he said.

The way forward

Vineet Singh, a police officer in the State police force, who spent a decade serving in Lucknow, suggests a practical approach to the crisis. Many buildings were constructed decades earlier when upgraded safety protocols were not in place, he says. "We need to retrofit old buildings with modern fire safety solutions. There may be structural limitations as some older structures were not designed to house modern systems such as smoke detectors or sprinklers, but wireless fire alarms are ideal for retrofits as they reduce extensive wiring challenges," he says.

Singh adds that sprinkler retrofits can use flexible systems, which are easier to install in tight spaces. "Fire-resistant coatings can be applied to structural elements without altering the appearance, and retrofitted fire doors with self-closing mechanisms can improve evacuation safety," Singh says. "We need to develop retrofit plans that balance safety standards with architectural preservation."

In older buildings, emergency evacuation can be improved by upgrading to LED exit signs and photoluminescent wayfinding markings. Around the world, many retrofit projects also involve installing wireless fire alarm and sprinkler systems in multi-storey residential buildings constructed decades ago without modern fire safety measures, he adds.

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From Page One

Ayodhya fund case: eight in judicial custody

The FIR was registered on Thursday, after a preliminary investigation by a Special Investigation Team.

Uttar Pradesh Opposition parties claimed that, while the FIR accused trust employees, the real bigwigs behind the alleged scam – such as Mr. Champat Rai, fellow SRJTK trustee Anil Mishra, and temple construction in-charge Gopal Rao – have been protected by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

"We will launch a campaign against this massive corruption and attempt to protect powerful people," said U.P. Congress chief Ajay Rai.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath vowed to enforce accountability. "Tampering with people's faith cannot be tolerated. As soon as the SIT report was received, action was initiated immediately," he said. "I assure you, and I had said this earlier as well, that we will separate truth from falsehood. Whoever tampers with the faith of the people will have to face the consequences. No one can be given such a free hand." He insisted that no "aspersions" should be cast on the sacred town of Ayodhya or its reigning deity.

The Hindu Group named 'Champion Publisher' of 2026

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Hindu Group members pose with the awards alongside other winners at the WAN-IFRA event in New Delhi. R.V. MOORTHY

The Hindu Group has been named the 'Champion Publisher of the Year 2026' by the World Association of News Publishers (WAN-IFRA), earning the title for the third time. The Group topped the table with seven awards at the WAN-IFRA Digital Media Awards South Asia 2026.

The title is awarded to the publisher securing the highest number of wins at the annual awards, which recognise outstanding digital projects demonstrating innovation, audience engagement, journalistic excellence, and the effective use of technology.

The Hindu won a gold each for 'Bihar SIR' in the 'Best AI-driven News Product, Format or Strategy' category and 'Young World Club' in 'Best News Website or App Relaunch'. It also secured a silver for 'Written by Journalists' in 'Best in Countering Disinformation'. Additionally, the publication took home three bronze awards: 'Made of Chennai' for 'Best Marketing Campaign for a News Brand', 'The Hindu Explains' for 'Best Newsletter', and 'We Went Middle East, Talked INR, and Found Gold!' for 'Best Reader Revenue'.

Frontline won a bronze for 'Mission Manipur' in the 'Best Use of Audio' category, taking The Hindu Group's overall tally to seven awards.

Competing with media houses across South Asia, *The Hindu* was among the winners alongside HT Media Labs, Reuters, The Quint, Jagran News Media, *Malayala Manorama*, *Financial Times*, and others.

The Hindu Group CEO L.V. Navaneeth received the 'Champion Publisher of the Year 2026' award from WAN-IFRA leaders – Chief Operating Officer Thomas Jacob, Chief Executive Officer Stig Orskov, and Managing Director (South Asia) Magdoom Mohamed at the Digital Media India 2026 Conference in Delhi on Thursday.

"Our goal has always been to strive for the highest standards of journalistic excellence and ethics. It is heartening to receive recognition for that work. Winning this honour for the third time shows that every member of The Hindu Group is doing something right," Mr. Navaneeth said.

WAN-IFRA is the world's largest international news media organisation, representing 3,000 news publishing companies and technology entrepreneurs, along with 40 publisher associations representing 18,000 publications across 120 countries.

The Digital Media Awards South Asia 2026 comprised 12 categories, with entries judged by digital media experts, editors, and industry leaders.

India's eastern borders affected by flow of opium from Myanmar: NCB

Neighbouring country emerges as alternative global opium source after ban on drugs in Afghanistan, says bureau; India's eastern borders through Manipur corridor are the most direct and porous entry point for this expanding production base

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

Following the 2022 Taliban-imposed ban on drugs in Afghanistan, Myanmar has emerged as an alternative source of global opium supply and the consequences are already visible along India's eastern borders, through the Manipur corridor, the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) said in its 2026 annual report.

The report, released on Friday by Home Minister Amit Shah, highlighted the fact that the northeastern States of Manipur, Mizoram, and Nagaland are bearing the sharpest frontline exposure due to the enhanced production of drugs in Myanmar.

Illegal trade: Myanmar's illicit opium cultivation expanded by approximately 56% between 2021 and 2023. AP

Porous border

Porous border mechanisms, including the Free Movement Regime (FMR) along the India-Myanmar border, have created conditions under which these States have transitioned from peripheral transit zones to active staging grounds for distribution of narcotics into the Indian hinterland.

Myanmar's illicit opium cultivation expanded by approximately 56% between 2021 and 2023, according to the NCB report, with the area under poppy cultivation reaching 45,200 hectares.

India's eastern borders through the Manipur corridor are the most direct and porous entry point for this expanding production base, the report said.

"Myanmar's Golden Triangle has expanded as both an opiate supplier and a dominant methamphetamine (Yaba tablets) hub. The convergence, primarily in areas controlled by ethnic armed groups in Shan State, has created a poly-drug production. The Manipur corridor, through which India's National Highway no. 102 passes, is the primary land entry point for both heroin and methamphetamine tablets," it said.

The second major trafficking corridor enters India through Champhai in Mizoram, which shares close proximity with Myanmar's Chin State.

Drugs are smuggled through unfenced and porous stretches of the border and routed towards Silchar in Assam's Barak Valley through Aizawl and adjoining road networks, the report added.

In 2025, Mizoram accounted for 1,477 kg of seized amphetamine-type stimulants, out of total seizures amounting to 3,485 kg across the country. The other States where such recoveries were reported are Manipur (535 kg), Delhi (454 kg), Gujarat (308 kg) and Karnataka (164 kg).

Drone-based trafficking

On the other side of the country, despite the Taliban's 2022 crackdown, which reduced Afghan opium production by 93% from its peak, around 13,200 tonnes of pre-ban narcotics are sustaining the trafficking pipelines and making their way into India through the western border.

The NCB said that drone-based drug trafficking from across the Pakistan border has seen a five-fold increase over the past five years, particularly into Punjab.

In 2025, there were 305 such cases, resulting in the seizure of 468 kg of narcotics, a 96% increase in quantity over 2024. Punjab alone accounted for 298 such cases and 461 kg seized, primarily heroin (449.751 kg) and methamphetamine (9.018 kg). Overall, Punjab accounted for 58% of total seizures, which amounted to 3,567 kg across the country.

"The scale of this threat is underscored by the growth trajectory: from just 3 incidents in 2021, incidents surged to 35 in 2022, 28 in 2023, before accelerating sharply to 178 incidents in 2024 and 305 incidents in 2025, a 100-fold increase in incident count over five years," the report said.

This exponential rise reflects the growing operational maturity of trafficking networks using unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to circumvent traditional border controls, the NCB said. Additional incidents were reported in Rajasthan and Jammu and Kashmir.

"The South Asian arm [of the drug trade via Afghanistan] flows through Pakistan into India via both the land frontier in Punjab and Rajasthan, and the maritime frontier along the Gujarat and Maharashtra coastlines, the latter a route of increasing concern given its use of fishing vessels and coastal craft that operate below the detection threshold of standard maritime surveillance," the NCB said.

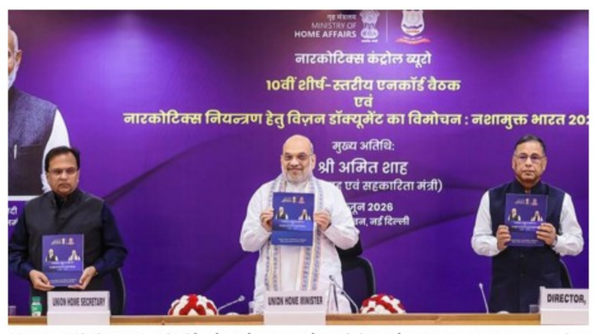
Amendments to anti-drug law will address emerging challenges, says Amit Shah

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Friday that the Department of Revenue would amend the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act and asked States to submit suggestions to address existing loopholes.

The NDPS Act and Rules will be updated to address emerging challenges and regulatory gaps while promoting a more reformative approach towards persons consuming drugs or suffering from addiction, according to the 'Vision Document on Drug Control (2026-2029)' released by Mr. Shah. He said that the entire road map had been prepared on the foundation of "detect, disrupt and destroy", and urged the State governments to target drug traffickers and gangsters hiding abroad, through Red Corner Notices with the help of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

He addressed the 10th apex-level meeting of the Narco-Coordination Centre (NCORD) organised by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB).



Home Minister Amit Shah releases the vision document on narcotics control during the 10th apex-level meeting of the NCB. PTI

He said that the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) was working towards establishing exclusive NDPS courts to ensure speedy convictions in major cases. The entire process of identifying proceeds of crime, freezing them, seizing them, and ensuring they do not return to the accused will have to be made evidence-based and equipped with modern technology, the Minister said.

Releasing the vision document, he said that the next three years will decide "whether addiction will defeat us or we will defeat addiction".

The document provides a time-bound national strategy to substantially dismantle the narcotics-drug ecosystem through coordinated action against trafficking, abuse, illicit finance and organised criminal networks.

More than 40 Ministries, Central agencies, State governments, district administrations, educational institutions, civil society organisations and citizens will work together under a common national framework against drugs. Enforcement efforts will shift from targeting individual carriers to identifying, investigating and dismantling complete drug trafficking networks, the document stated.

It also called for AI-enabled profiling to strengthen interdiction capabilities across land, sea and air trafficking routes.

Four Odisha officials suspended for errors in school textbooks

Satyasundar Barik
BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha government on Friday placed four senior officers including former director of State Council of Education, Research and Training (SCERT) Manoj Padhi under suspension and took disciplinary action against six persons holding them responsible for over 2,000 mistakes in textbooks being taught in Classes 1 to 8.

The action was taken following the submission of an inquiry report by a committee constituted under the chairmanship of the Development Commissioner to examine errors in school textbooks. While teachers pointed out errors totalling over 2,100 in textbooks printed for the 2026-27 academic year, the government acknowledged 1,678 mistakes.

Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi issued directions for the suspension of Mr. Padhi along with three assistant directors – Pralipta Mishra, Dilip Kumar Sahu, and Bharati Tudu. Moreover, disciplinary actions have been initiated against six assistant directors.

Quality Assurance Cell

"The SCERT will prepare a Master Errata Register and provide corrected information to all students, and establish a Quality Assurance Cell," the CMO said.

"The government will provide replacement pages or reprinted inserts for serious errors. After rectifying mistakes online, the corrected PDF will be declared as the official teaching version. Conduct of immediate correction orientation for teachers has been recommended," the statement said.

The panel recommended issue of show-cause notices and action against the DTP agency, printer, and approving authority.

Students of CBSE Classes 7 to 9 can learn two foreign languages for now

Maitri Porecha
NEW DELHI

Students studying in Classes 7, 8 and 9 in Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) affiliated schools can continue learning foreign languages under the three-language policy until Class 10, sources in the Ministry of Education stated on Friday.

The clarification comes over a month after CBSE stated that students in Class 9 must study three languages, of which two should be native to India, from July 1 in the 2026-27 academic year.

This led to CBSE schools instructing their students who had opted for foreign languages like French, German, Spanish and so on to switch to a native language, in case they are already studying English.

There are at least six lakh students who study French and 1.5 lakh students who study German in all schools across India spread across various grades, including CBSE schools.

The CBSE is expected to reverse its May 15 circular which had mandated at least two Indian languages for Class 9 students. PTI

Strong pushback

An official spokesperson from the German Embassy confirmed that the diplomatic mission is in touch with the Government of India over the issue.

Sources also stated that there had been a pushback by German and French Embassies against the Centre's three-language formula which will gradually lead to phasing out of foreign language teaching from CBSE schools by 2030-31, if not sooner.

Sources have clarified that the three-language formula will apply to students entering Class 6 who will have to study three languages, two of which will be native to India.

The CBSE circular led to protests from parents, students and teachers, who had approached Supreme Court against the abrupt switch, arguing that students in Class 9 who have already studied a foreign language for the past three to four years will find it very difficult to suddenly switch their language option.

CBSE is expected to reverse its May 15 circular which had mandated a three-language formula under the National Education Policy to be applied to Class 9 students, the sources added.

The clarification comes over a week after the Supreme Court refused to grant interim relief on petitions challenging the implementation of CBSE's three-language policy for Class 9 students in 2026-27.

It is expected that CBSE will withdraw the latest circular in light of the controversy and will direct schools to gradually implement the three-language policy over five consecutive academic years up to 2030-31, rather than rolling it out for all classes from 2026-27.

Drugs on credit is pushing substance abuse in Manipur: CM

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

Drug traffickers not only changed their routes in Manipur after the ethnic conflict erupted in May 2023 but they also adopted a credit policy to push consumption during troubled times, Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh said on Friday.

Addressing an event organised by the State's Social Welfare Department to mark the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, he said, many youth in Manipur started using heroin and other drugs in the 1970s.

"At that time, heroin was extremely expensive, and it was largely affordable only to the children from rich families. But things have changed now," he said.

Manipur used to be a major conduit for heroin, methamphetamine, and other synthetic drugs via Moreh, a town on the India-Myanmar border.

Mr. Singh said the routes for drug trafficking changed significantly after the ethnic crisis began in 2023.

Mizoram route

"Trafficking of drugs has largely been diverted through Mizoram, while smaller quantities continue to be routed from Moreh to Churachandpur via roads constructed under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana," he said.

He added that the nearest point for distributing drugs after they reach Churachandpur is Kwatka.

Citing Kwatka-based civil society organisations, Mr. Singh said almost 70% of the youth in the area were indulging in drugs. "The drug peddlers often allow users to purchase drugs on credit. This practice has made the drug users get easy access to drugs," he said.

Congress seeks SC-monitored probe into Ram Temple case

Exploiting Lord Ram for votes and money unacceptable, says Congress, demanding dissolution of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust; accountability must be fixed at the top, it adds

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Friday demanded a Supreme Court-monitored investigation into the allegations of embezzlement of donations at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

Addressing a press conference, senior Congress leader Rajeev Shukla said the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust should immediately be disbanded, and the management of the temple handed over to religious leaders like Mahant and Sankaracharya.

"What is this temple Trust within a party? This is happening with meticulous planning. First, capture the Trust of the big temples, appoint your own people, then take out the donations and use it for political purposes," Mr. Shukla alleged.

Sharp attack: The Congress says the FIR is against lower-level officials, and accountability has to be fixed at the top. PTI

"Exploiting Lord Ram for votes as well as for [currency] notes is unacceptable to us," the Congress leader said.

Appeal to PM

Mr. Shukla said Prime Minister Narendra Modi should intervene since he had done the consecration of Lord Ram's idol in Ayodhya.

The Congress leader asserted that with the Uttar Pradesh registering a first information report (FIR) in the alleged embezzlement case after the special investigation team (SIT) report, it is clear that the State government has acknowledged that there has been "a loot to the tune of thousands of crores".

"This is a very serious matter which concerns the faith of millions of people," Mr. Shukla said. "I would request the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court that an inquiry should be ordered under his supervision."

'Missing records'

He said women from South India often followed a tradition of offering their personal jewellery to Lord Ram. "Can you imagine that there was no record of such jewellery donation? Where are our principles? Poor people saved and donated ₹50 or ₹100, and even that money was siphoned off," the Congress leader added.

Mr. Shukla said that the FIR was against lower-level functionaries and officials, and accountability had to be fixed at the top.

"Last elections, there was a slogan that those who brought Lord Ram should be brought to power. Now, those who have looted Lord Ram, what's the punishment?" he asked.

The RSS pracharak at the centre of Ram Temple donation controversy

NEWS ANALYSIS

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

Few individuals have been as closely associated with the Ram Janmabhoomi movement as Champat Rai. For decades, the 79-year-old worked largely behind the scenes as an RSS pracharak and senior Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) functionary, helping steer the movement through organisational, legal, and administrative challenges, before taking charge of the temple's construction and management after the Supreme Court's 2019 verdict.

Now, barely two-and-a-half years after the temple's consecration, Mr. Rai finds himself at the centre of a controversy, with allegations of corruption with regard to donations received by the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra (SRJTK) Trust. The investigation has brought unprecedented scrutiny to the project he has overseen since its conception and has transformed Mr. Rai's own public role from a low-profile organiser to one of the most recognisable faces of the temple project now being brought to account.

Champat Rai

Mr. Rai was born in Nagina in Bijnor district of Uttar Pradesh. He studied chemistry and briefly worked as a lecturer before becoming a full-time Sangh pracharak. He later joined the VHP, becoming one of its most trusted organisers whose contributions were largely used during the decades-long Ram Janmabhoomi campaign. Here, he handled organisational coordination, documentation, and liaison with legal, religious and administrative stakeholders, earning a reputation for meticulous planning rather than public visibility.

The Supreme Court's 2019 judgment, which cleared the way for the construction of the Ram Temple, marked a turning point in his career. Appointed as general secretary of the Trust, Mr. Rai became the operational head of the temple project, overseeing construction, finances, pilgrim management, and coordination with multiple government agencies.

His public profile grew further during the nationwide donation drive launched in 2021, which mobilised contributions from millions of devotees. Along with the campaign came greater scrutiny. Opposition parties and activists questioned a series of land transactions linked to the Trust, alleging irregularities after land prices rose sharply between successive sales.

Mr. Rai emerged as the Trust's principal public defender, repeatedly rejecting allegations of wrongdoing. He maintained that the transactions were lawful, independently valued, and essential for the temple's long-term expansion.

Unwelcome spotlight

The latest allegations about donations, however, have thrust him into an unwelcome spotlight which he is trying to avoid.

The Uttar Pradesh government has constituted a Special Investigation Team to probe the matter and several arrests have been made, but no court has yet held the trust guilty of any wrongdoing. Social media speculation about Mr. Rai's resignation was also dismissed by VHP office-bearers, and the man himself has not emerged from his self-imposed silence to either confirm or deny the rumours.

Cong. 'surrendered' Katchatheevu to Sri Lanka, says BJP

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Friday targeted the Congress over what it called the "surrender" of Katchatheevu island to Sri Lanka during its rule on June 26, 1974, without taking any stakeholders into confidence.

Addressing the media, BJP MP and spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi called it a "black spot" in the entire history of the "Congress's record of surrenders". "It began with surrendering to the Muslim League, the creator of Pakistan, in 1947; then surrendering Pakistan-occupied Jammu & Kashmir (PoJK) to Pakistan; then surrendering Aksai Chin to China. It almost surrendered Assam to China and also lost access to Mansarovar," he said.

Sudhanshu Trivedi

"On June 26, 1974, the Congress government surrendered Katchatheevu to Sri Lanka. None of the stakeholders were taken into confidence. Fishermen today face enormous difficulties due to this. Even the Catholic community, which earlier visited there for the St. Anthony shrine, is not allowed to have the Indian flag on their boats," said Mr. Trivedi.

UCC will be implemented in Bengal through proper procedure: Suvendu

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari on Friday said a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) would be implemented in the State through a proper procedure instituted by a committee headed by a judge.

"The way it [UCC] was implemented in Gujarat, Uttarakhand, and Assam by following a procedure. Similarly, it will be implemented in West Bengal. I will inform the Assembly on Monday [on the development]," Mr. Adhikari said.

The remarks come at a time when speculation is rife about the UCC being introduced in the ongoing Assembly session. Its implementation was promised by Union Home Minister Amit Shah during the campaign for the West Bengal Assembly election.

Suvendu Adhikari made the remarks on the sidelines of an event to pay tribute to poet Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay in Kolkata. ANI

Other Ministers in the State Cabinet have welcomed the move. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Sankar Ghosh said the implementation of the UCC would be a historic step.

"The UCC is one of the utmost important Bill to be introduced in West Bengal. The State government has decided to introduce UCC on Monday. There are other States such as Uttarakhand which has already passed the Bill. The UCC Bill has already been placed in the Assembly in Bihar and a few other States. So, this is one of the historical steps taken by West Bengal," he said.

Concerns raised

The Trinamool Congress, in a statement, said that reform could not be imposed; it must be built through dialogue, trust, and constitutional values.

"Our concern is with the agenda of the BJP. Whether a UCC is being pursued through consensus, constitutional morality, and genuine concern or whether it is being used and weaponised as another instrument of political polarisation. India's strength lies in combining equality with respect for diversity," the party said in a statement.

Observing that no personal law should perpetuate discrimination, the Trinamool said "the BJP is known for exploiting sensitive issues for political gain".

"There must be greater consultation with all stakeholders such as vulnerable groups and adivasi communities," the Trinamool said. Adivasi communities in the State have expressed concern over the implementation of the UCC.

'BJP govt. chose to hide the sacrifice of heroes for a year'

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Friday attacked the Centre for its one-year delay in recognising the sacrifice of six soldiers who laid down their lives during Operation Sindoor. Operation Sindoor was launched in response to the Pahalgam terror attack.

Congress leader Pawan Khera said it was a shame that the government that wraps itself in nationalism had denied the heroes the recognition they deserved for a year. In a post on X, he named the six personnel and said they are the brave sons of India who laid down their lives defending India's honour.

"Their names should have been etched into the national consciousness.

Pawan Khera

Their families should have seen a grateful nation honouring their sacrifice. Instead, for an entire year, the BJP government chose to conceal their martyrdom from the nation," Mr. Khera said.

"The same government that wraps itself in the flag and speaks endlessly of nationalism denied these heroes the recognition and remembrance they deserved. Such a shame!," he said.

Nearly 6 crore names have been deleted in first year of SIR of electoral rolls

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, which has so far led to the deletion of nearly six crore voters and triggered acrimony between the Opposition and the Election Commission of India (EC), has completed one year, as the poll roll clean-up exercise continues in 19 States and Union Territories.

The pilot SIR exercise commenced in Bihar on June 24 last year, ahead of the Assembly polls. Following the Bihar SIR, the State's electoral roll was pruned by nearly 65 lakh voters, amid allegations by the Opposition and activists that the poll authority was working at the behest of the BJP to disenfranchise citizens.

In March, the Supreme Court unanimously upheld the constitutional validity of the EC's move to carry out the SIR.

In March, the Supreme Court unanimously upheld the constitutional validity of the EC's move to carry out the SIR. PTI

Individuals whose names were deleted during the SIR are being excluded from State welfare benefits in West Bengal and Bihar. Following recent Assembly elections, both governments announced that voter roll purification data is being linked to social security.

SIR is now part of the NCERT's Social Science textbook, describing it as an exercise to ensure that no eligible citizen is left out and no ineligible person is included in the electoral roll.

In the second phase of the exercise – in Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Puducherry, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Goa, the combined voters' list was pruned by 10.2%.

The voter base before the poll roll clean-up across these States and Union territories stood at over 50.99 crore. Post the exercise, the voters' list stands at 45.81 crore – a decline of over 5.18 crore.

Rahul completes two years as Leader of the Opposition

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Rahul Gandhi, who completed two years as the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, said that he would continue to carry the voice of the people to the corridors of power and fight for issues.

In a post on social media platform X, accompanied by a three-and-a-half-minute video of his speeches and interventions over the past two years, Mr. Gandhi said that he had devoted every day since assuming office to representing the concerns of ordinary Indians.

"Today marks two years since I became the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha. Every single day of these two years has been dedicated to one task - to carry the voice of every Indian to the corridors of power," he said.

"Whether it's the fight for NEET aspirants, exposing electoral fraud, or defending the Constitution, I have stood with you on every front. I stand with you today, and I always will," he said.

Rahul Gandhi

Mr. Gandhi said the trust reposed in him by the people, "from the streets to Parliament", remained his greatest strength. "The journey is long, but my resolve remains the same - I will keep fighting every battle for you. Jai Hind. Jai Constitution," he said.

Later in the day, Mr. Gandhi also took a swipe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi after the latter wished Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on his birthday and praised his efforts in implementing the National Education Policy.

Kuki-Zo Council's apology for killings is not enough: Manipur Naga youth body

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

An apex Naga students' body in Manipur on Friday said the "so-called apology" issued by the Kuki-Zo Council (KZC) on the killing of six Naga civilians was unacceptable.

The All Naga Students' Association, Manipur (ANSAM), criticised the apex Kuki-Zo body for using a derogatory term – 'Kacha Naga' – while referring to the six slain people from the Liangmai Naga community. Kacha means 'raw'.

On Thursday, the KZC had said it regretted the killing of the six Naga civilians abducted from Kangpokpi district's Leilon Vaiphei village, after the killing of three Thadou church leaders on May 13.

The Thadous are divided about their identity as Kukis. A section claims they are a distinct community, while another insists they belong to the greater Kuki group.

A rally by the All Naga Students' Association, Manipur, demanding justice for the killing of six Naga civilians, in Imphal. ANI

The ANSAM said the KZC's "regret" was neither an apology nor an admission of the "unlawful and inhumane" crime. "On the contrary, it is tantamount to a direct challenge and insult to the Naga people and reflects an alarming disposition of arrogance and perceived supremacy...," it said.

The students' body also said that the use of a pejorative for the victims revealed a "disturbing persistence of prejudice and communal disdain".

"The Association categorically asserts that no apology can be deemed credible, sincere, and acceptable until the perpetrators responsible for the abduction, torture, mutilation, and brutal killing of the six innocent Naga hostages are identified, apprehended, and punished in accordance with the rule of law," the ANSAM said in a statement.

The association pointed out that the Nagas have no access to or influence over the areas between the Kuki-dominated Kotzim and Kotlen villages of Kangpokpi district, where the three church leaders were killed.

INBRIEF

Kolkata warehouse collapse toll hits 16; search continues

With five more workers reported dead in Kolkata's Taratala warehouse collapse, the toll has increased to 16 on Friday. Three persons were taken out from the accident site on Friday morning and were declared dead at the hospital. Two workers succumbed to injuries at a State-run health facility over the past 24 hours. According to the police, 33 people have been rescued from the accident site, of which 16 workers have died, and 17 are being administered treatment in the State-run health facility. Rescue operations are being carried out at the site by NDRF personnel.

Pune fort murder: CM assures speedy justice to victim's kin

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Friday assured the family of Ketan Agarwal, who was allegedly pushed to death from Lohagad Fort by his fiancee and her lover, that the government would ensure strict punishment to those responsible and spare no effort in securing justice. Mr. Fadnavis also accepted the Agarwal family's demand to try the case in a fast-track court. Ketan's father, Vishal Agarwal, met the Chief Minister in Pune and sought justice for his son. Ketan's fiancee Siya Goyal (20) and her lover Chetan Chaudhary (22) are accused of pushing Ketan off a cliff at Lohagad Fort, located in Maval taluka of Pune district, on June 18. PTI

Govt. asks hospitals to publish post-transplant survival data

Data being collected to reveal success rate of transplant surgeries in various hospitals and ensure patients make informed choices; registered hospitals must display the data on their homepage

S. Vijay Kumar
CHENNAI

Registered transplant hospitals have been told to display the crucial data on the home page of their websites. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

The Union Health and Family Welfare Ministry has asked the State governments to direct registered organ transplant hospitals to reveal post-transplant survival data and publish the same on their respective websites.

The data are being collected for the first time on such a scale to reveal the success rate of transplant surgeries, especially kidney, lung and heart transplants, and lifespan of those who have received the organs. The results are expected to enable patients requiring transplants to take a decision or make a choice. The hospitals are told to strictly adhere to informed consent requirements and ensure that all relevant information regarding transplant procedures, risks, and outcomes is adequately disclosed to patients and their families.

In a note to the Health Secretaries of the States and Union Territories, the National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (NOTTO), which functions under the Directorate-General of Health Services, referred to a letter written by Dakshina Kannada MP Brijesh Chowta on the need to enhance transparency and accountability of kidney transplantation outcomes.

The MP had emphasised the need for tracking long-term transplant outcomes, including graft survival, complications, and mortality, as well as disclosure of post-transplant survival data by hospitals and strict adherence to informed consent and patient communication protocols.

The NOTTO maintains the National Organ and Tissue Transplant Registry, which includes data of kidney donors and recipients. Its Director, Anil Kumar, said in the note that regular and comprehensive reporting of post-transplant data would strengthen monitoring of transplant outcomes, improve traceability, and support evidence-based policy decisions.

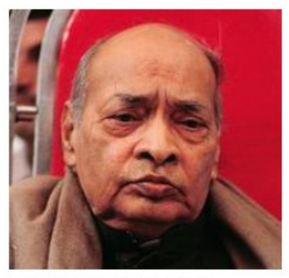
Boosting transparency

Registered transplant hospitals across the country were told to display the crucial data on the home page of their respective websites. The process was part of the initiatives to strengthen transparency, accountability, and outcome monitoring in organ transplantation nationwide. Asked for his views, a senior transplant surgeon in Chennai said crude mortality rates had very limited informational value for individual patients wanting to make a choice of hospitals. "Until risk-stratified mortality outcomes that have been duly scrutinised in an unbiased manner are available both from government and private hospitals, it will be near impossible to make informed choices," he said.

The data hospitals have been told to publish – number of patients alive after six months, one year, three years and five years – will be difficult to collate as there is no mechanism for such a follow-up, he said. "Deaths post-transplant happen due to a variety of reasons such as age, comorbidities and other risk factors. Even if post-survival data are shared by hospitals, it will be challenging to authenticate the veracity of the claims," he said.

Exhibition to pay tribute to legacy of Narasimha Rao

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI



Late Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao. FILE PHOTO

The Prime Ministers Museum and Library (PMML) will celebrate the 105th birth anniversary of the former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao on Saturday with an exhibition showcasing a collection of rare photographs, official documents, speeches, correspondence and archival material tracing his journey in public life.

As a part of its regular activities, the Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya (Prime Ministers' Museum) in New Delhi showcases the lives, vision and contributions of Prime Ministers since Independence and has started celebrating their birth anniversaries.

Rao was born on June 28, 1921, in Warangal district of present-day Telangana.

The exhibits will highlight his leadership during a critical phase in India's history and his role in introducing the landmark economic reforms of liberalisation, privatisation, and globalisation that transformed the nation's economic landscape.

The exhibition will explore Rao's multi-faceted personality as a scholar, freedom fighter, reformer, and visionary statesman. Visitors will gain insights into his contributions to governance, diplomacy, economic transformation, and nation-building, as well as his intellectual and literary pursuits.

Audiovisual show

The exhibition, through photographs and audiovisual presentations, will provide visitors a deeper understanding of the life, vision, and legacy of Rao. It aims to celebrate the enduring legacy of the statesman often remembered as the architect of modern, globalised India, a senior official of the Culture Ministry said.

The exhibition will be open to visitors from June 27 at the Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya.

CM, L-G join Muharram processions in Kashmir

The Hindu Bureau
SRINAGAR

Muharram processions were held across the Kashmir Valley on Friday to mark Ashura. The solemn day commemorates the martyrdom of Hussain – the grandson of Prophet Muhammad – who was killed in the Battle of Karbala in the 7th century.

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant-Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah joined the mourners. Leaders of Opposition parties also joined the processions.

The mourners assembled early in the morning at Srinagar's Gulshan Bagh and took part in the processions leading up to Zadibal in the old city. The mourners marched through the streets as they wailed and performed chest-beating in a show of grief.

Top court calls time on 30-year-old case of death over a watch

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

A fatal scuffle over a ₹500 watch between neighbours led to a nearly 30-year-old criminal case, which finally drew to an end in the Supreme Court due to death, old age and exhaustion.

A Bench headed by Justice Ujjal Bhuyan closed criminal proceedings in the culpable homicide case after noting that two of the three accused have died during the pendency of the appeal, the remaining one was well over 60 years of age and it has been three weary decades of litigation since the deceased, Padam Singh, fell into a dry canal during the scuffle and died from his injuries.

The judgment was based on an appeal filed by the surviving accused, Mathu, against an Uttarakhand High Court judgment of July 2012.

The High Court had upheld a Dehradun court's finding that the three accused persons, Mathu, Ramu and Manua, were guilty of culpable homicide without intention of causing the death of Padam Singh.

The trio had challenged the decision in the Supreme Court, which allowed them to be released on bail in December 2012. Manua and Ramu died while awaiting the decision of the top court.

Justice Bhuyan, in a judgment dated June 25, recounted the tragic turn of events that started with the sale of a watch between two neighbours nearly 30 years ago. Padam had sold the watch to Manua, his neighbour, for ₹500 in February 1997.

"All injuries occurred because of the fall of the deceased into the dry canal which had a rock-bed," Justice Bhuyan said.

NFSA amendments: 7 kg of foodgrains for a person, and maximum 35 kg for a household

EXPLAINER

A.M. Jigeesh
NEW DELHI

The story so far: The Union Food and Public Distribution Department on Wednesday published a draft of the proposed amendments to the National Food Security Act (NFSA). The draft is uploaded on the department's website. The public can comment on the amendments till July 13.

The amendment

A new provision in Section 3 of the National Food Security Act, 2013, proposes that every person belonging to households covered under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) shall be entitled to 7 kg of foodgrains every month to a maximum of 35 kg per household. For AAY cardholders, this allocation will be free of any charges. Earlier, it was 35 kg per AAY household, irrespective of the number of members in the household.

Reason

The reason the Union government has given in the notice, along with the draft amendment, is that the existing household-based entitlement under the AAY, though intended as a protective measure for the most vulnerable families, results in significant inequities depending upon the size of the household.

"Smaller households receive a higher per-capita entitlement, whereas larger households receive a lower per-capita entitlement, which may fall below the entitlement available to priority households," the notice adds. The government maintains that the aim and purpose are to remove "intra-category inequities,

Activists have demanded allocation of 14 kg per person.

provide for more rational foodgrain allocation and better align entitlements with nutritional requirements."

Criticism

Certain non-BJP-ruled States and activists of the Right to Food Campaign have voiced concerns over the amendment. Kerala Food Minister Anoop Jacob told presspersons that the State government would write to the Union government against the proposed amendment. He said the allocation of 35 kg per AAY household must continue. The removal of this would result in decreased allocation to States such as Kerala, he added.

Anuradha Talwar, an office-bearer of the Right to Food Campaign, said the amendment would bring a "North-South divide" in foodgrain allocation. She said families in the South had fewer people than those in North India and smaller families would get less allocations. "Also the number of AAY families has not been revised as the Census was delayed. A large section of the population, who must come under AAY, are not getting the benefits of the Food Security Act despite the increase in population," she said, adding that instead of increasing the allocation, the government is decreasing it.

Another issue is that the activists have been demanding allocation of 14 kg per person. They argue that if the government wants to base the allocation on the recommendations of the Indian Council of Medical Research, then pulses and edible oil must also be provided. "The poorest of the poor doesn't have market access to buy essentials at the market rate. So the government must provide pulses or cooking oil for them," Ms. Talwar added.

The next step

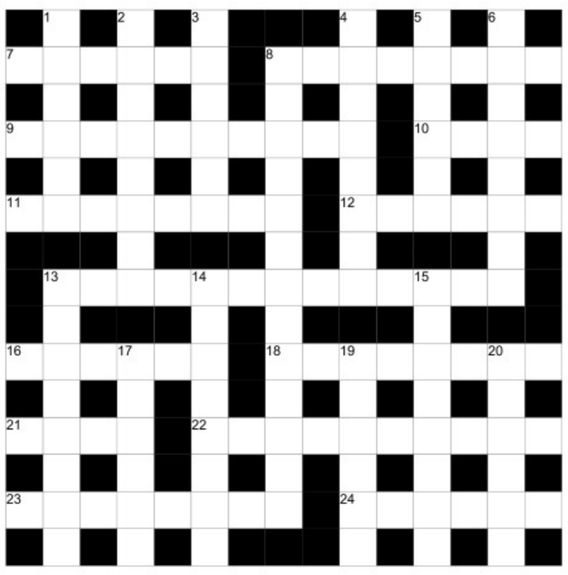
After considering the comments from the public, the government is likely to place a fresh draft before the State governments and other departments. After that , a final draft will be brought to Parliament. Since the matter is politically sensitive, the government is likely to take careful steps as elections to States such as Uttar Pradesh are round the corner.

TH CROSSWORD + 14831

(set by Saral)

Solve this puzzle online and access more puzzles at *https://thehindu.com/crosswords*

SCAN TO PLAY



ACROSS

7 Pulling out note from friendly resident (6)
8 Unmarried woman turns model with hesitation (8)
9 Arrive outside hospital rooms maybe to get cell component (10)
10 Reverend hiding? Always (4)
11 Divine food aroma is spreading across centre of lobby (8)
12 Short memo with a line to legal official (6)
13 Figure of a large map? Roll out (13)
16 Mostly enjoyable movie before outing (6)
18 Promote old exercise followed by revised diet (8)
21 Support boy's every achievement mainly from the beginning (4)
22 Dazzling writer trips on trail, reportedly (10)
23 Mark covering conservative's attitude in alliance (8)
24 Plenty of soldiers caught in tornado (6)

DOWN

1 Song from soldier near border (6)
2 Worker with drunk rep leaving beer parlour, collapsed (8)
3 Tempts company into manufacturing dyes (6)
4 Government order stalling fresh invite to surrender (4,2,2)
5 Republican occupying property in state (6)
6 Message group about member rioting initially (8)
8 Get cover ideas perhaps for CD, say (7,6)
13 Cost of carpeting changed, nothing new (5,3)
14 Liberal, a culprit without home causing tears (8)
15 Mock clear-headed Irish backing English (8)
17 Moron abused drug, passed away (2,4)
19 Promise of ultimately top school with advantage (6)
20 Fish eating doctor in plain (6)

SUDOKU

	1	8	7	4				
3							7	
	9	6						4
		9	5		6	2		
6				7				9
		3	4		1	7		
1						5	4	
	6							7
				5	2	9	6	

No.SS6924 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to previous puzzle

C	E	L	L	A	R	■	B	L
O	■	E	■	L	■	■	I	■
R	U	M	B	L	E	■	I	M
U	■	O	■	O	S	■	B	A
N	O	N	E	V	E	N	T	■
D	■	A	■	E	■	O	■	H
U	N	D	E	R	B	R	E	A
M	■	E	■	T	■	I	■	B
■	■	■	H	A	N	D	I	N
A	■	T	■	E	■	G	■	T
G	R	U	M	P	S	■	B	A
E	■	N	■	L	■	B	■	T
O	D	D	B	A	L	L	S	■
L	■	R	■	C	■	A	■	■
D	E	A	D	E	N	D	S	■

K	L	E	G	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

5	9	7	8	6	3	1	4	2
1	6	3	9	4	2	8	5	7
4	2	8	7	5	1	9	3	6
8	7	5	2	3	4	6	1	9
2	3	1	6	9	8	5	7	4
6	4	9	1	7	5	2	8	3
3	8	4	5	2	9	7	6	1
9	5	6	4	1	7	3	2	8
7	1	2	3	8	6	4	9	5

FAITH

Mystique of Vettudaiyal

The power of a local deity is a subaltern reality when it comes to faith. Local legends hold a powerful sway over communities that are large in number but outside the elitist spectrum. Spiritual speakers acknowledge this frequently and in fact attribute the local deity, a Kali, as a legendary manifestation of Ambal, Thayar, Varahi, Parvati, etc., and of Shiva and Vishnu as Ayyanar, Karuppusamy, etc. To the faithful, they are simply their everyday protectors, said P. Swaminathan in a discourse.

The Vettudaiyal temple in Ariyakurichi village of Tamil Nadu's Sivaganga district boasts of one such legend. Udaiyal, a 12-year-old girl, herding cattle was martyred when confronted by British mercenaries. The local king, Muthu Vadagunatha Udaiyar, was an ardent devotee of Lord Shiva. He was ambushed by the same mercenaries, since he refused to bow to the British who were attempting to colonise the region and remained patriotic.

After the king's death, his wife Velu Nachiyar carried forward his political legacy. On one occasion when she was chased by the mercenaries, the legendary queen took shelter off a fork of a road and the pursuers sought to know her whereabouts from the young Udaiyal herding cattle there. Udaiyal refused to divulge any information and was martyred. Velu Nachiyar built a shrine for the girl eight years later. By then the girl, Vettudaiyal (*vettu + udaiyal* – a strike on the one who possesses everything) had become a legend, a protector of the masses.

The legend grew over the centuries and to this day, people continue to appeal to Her for grace, for resolution of their problems and for everyday protection.

INBRIEF

GMR Airports takes over operations of Nagpur airport

Airport developer GMR Airports Ltd. took over the operations of Nagpur's Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar International Airport on Friday. "The first phase will focus on expanding the passenger terminal to accommodate three million travellers annually, ensuring a seamless and efficient travel experience," chairman, GMR Airports, GBS Raju was quoted in a press statement. Future phases aim at raising the airport's capacity to serve up to 30 million passengers annually, backed by extensive airside infrastructure upgrades, including the construction of a new Air Traffic Control tower. The airport will feature a state-of-the-art cargo terminal with an annual handling capacity of 20,000 metric tonne. GMR Nagpur International Airport Ltd. (GNIAL) signed a 30-year concession agreement in November 2024 with MIHAN India Ltd. to operate, manage, develop and modernise the airport.

Middlemen offer Iranian oil to India refiners on U.S. waiver

Several middlemen have offered Indian refiners discounted Iranian oil as Tehran looks to expedite sales after Washington's temporary sanctions waiver, Indian refining sources said. On Monday, the United States waived sanctions on Iran for 60 days after the first talks under a nascent peace deal, opening a narrow window for renewed energy trade. The approaches to Indian refiners have come directly from National Iranian Oil Co (NIOC) and through intermediaries saying they have been allocated oil by the Iranian state producer, the sources said. "Apart from NIOC, several traders are contacting us for the sale of Iranian oil. But my priority is to give a chance to NIOC," said a refining source. The sources declined to be named. NIOC is telling Indian buyers Iranian crude would be $3 to $4 a barrel cheaper than similar regional grades. The traders are mainly from small and mid-sized trading firms based in Singapore and Dubai, the sources said, declining to name them. REUTERS

Govt. to simplify drug import rules for test, examination, analysis

Ministry already amended New Drugs and Clinical Trials Rules, 2019 in Jan. 2026 introducing similar notification system for local test licences

Bindu Shajan Perappadan
NEW DELHI

Right prescription: The amendment is expected to significantly cut compliance burden on applicants. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

Union Health Ministry has proposed amendments to the Drugs Rules, 1945 to simplify the procedure for securing permission for import of drugs for examination, test or analysis. The change introduces an acknowledgement-based system for import of all drugs in small quantities for analytical and non-clinical testing purposes.

Under the revised provisions, applicants intending to import such drugs will be required to submit a prior intimation form and may import the drug based on the acknowledgement generated upon submission of such intimation.

The procedure is applicable for import of drugs for analytical and non-clinical testing, except for certain drugs belonging to the categories of sex hormones, cytotoxic drugs, beta lactam drugs, biologics containing live microorganisms and narcotic and psychotropic substances, said a release issued by the Health Ministry.

The Ministry has already carried out amendments to the New Drugs and Clinical Trials Rules, 2019 in January introducing a similar notification system for domestic test licences. The present proposed amendment expands it to imports also.

The amendment is expected to significantly cut compliance burden on applicants by eliminating licensing needs for importing small lots of drugs for testing or R&D purposes.

Deregulation role

"This will play a substantial role in deregulating the R&D sector in pharmaceuticals and enable start-ups and industries to quickly initiate testing or analysis. The online intimation system will offer a seamless and instant gateway for the stakeholders," said a senior health official. The draft has been placed in the public domain for stakeholder consultation.

Meanwhile, the Ministry also published a draft notification proposing amendments to Rule 31 of the Drugs Rules, 1945 with the goal of rationalising the residual shelf-life norm for imported drugs and promoting ease of doing business in the pharma sector.

The draft amendment proposes to revise the norm of a minimum residual shelf life of more than 60% for imported drugs to a minimum residual shelf life of 12 months at the time of import. However, in view of specialised nature and public health considerations, the existing norm of a minimum residual shelf life of more than 60% shall continue to apply to biological products and radio pharmaceuticals.

The proposed amendment seeks to aid more efficiency in the pharmaceutical supply chain while maintaining availability of quality medicines for patients. By ensuring imported drugs have a minimum remaining shelf life of 12 months upon entry into the country, the proposal provides sufficient time for distribution and consumption before expiry, thereby ensuring patients continue to receive medicines with adequate usable shelf life.

IMO pauses Gulf vessel evacuation as Iran attacks ship

M. Kalyanaraman
CHENNAI

About 500 ships are in the area and evacuating them could take about five weeks, says IMO

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez said the agency has paused its involvement in the evacuation of vessels stranded in the Persian Gulf following an Iranian attack on a commercial ship transiting the Strait of Hormuz through the southern Oman route.

Mr. Dominguez said the vessel, Taiwan's container ship *Ever Lovely*, was not transiting under the IMO-facilitated plan.

The IMO Secretary General said he did not know whether the ship had been in touch with the U.S. Navy before the incident. No one was injured and the vessel resumed its voyage.

The attack followed a joint declaration by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) States, including Oman, after a meeting attended by the United States, stating that there should be no "tolls, fees, or attempts to assert control over the strait."

Iran criticises move

Iran has criticised The International Maritime Organization plan, arguing it does not adequately recognise Tehran's role in managing traffic through the strategic waterway.

Mr. Dominguez, however, said the Foreign Ministers of Oman and Iran met on Monday (June 22, 2026), and the Organisation's plan was announced the following day based on those discussions.

According to a statement issued by Iran after the conclusion of that meeting, the "two countries had agreed to continue talks through a joint committee of their Foreign Ministries to reach an understanding on the future management of shipping in the Strait of Hormuz, the services to be provided and the associated costs, in accordance with international standards."

115 vessels transit Strait

Mr. Dominguez said some 115 vessels had transited the strait from the beginning of the week to the pause. Since the attack, four ships have used the northern route and 11 the southern route. He said shipowners should conduct their own risk assessments before transiting the strait now that IMO has paused its role.

'Assurances needed'

The IMO remains in contact with Iran via its embassy in London, where the organisation is headquartered, he said.

Mr. Dominguez said the IMO would resume its role once all stakeholder-nations provide 'guarantees' on safety of ships and seafarers.

About 500 ships are in the area and evacuating them could take about five weeks, he added, noting that both Oman and Iran exercise jurisdiction over the Strait of Hormuz.

Anil Ambani

SEBI rejects Anil Ambani's settlement plea for RInfra

Reuters
MUMBAI

India's financial markets regulator has rejected applications by industrialist Anil Ambani and his corporate group to settle allegations of misusing almost $700 million of company funds, documents reviewed by *Reuters* show.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India last week rejected the requests over allegations that Ambani and Reliance Infrastructure were involved in improperly routing ₹6,526 crore ($691 million) to entities related to controlling shareholder Ambani, the documents show.

Mr. Ambani, the younger brother of billionaire Mukesh Ambani, has faced growing scrutiny from regulators and enforcement agencies over the past 18 months. Several group executives have been arrested on fraud charges and some of Mr.Anil Ambani's properties frozen.

A spokesperson for the Anil Ambani group said: "The allegations are categorically denied. The matters are sub judice."

SEBI did not respond to a request for comment.

Businessline MSME meet on crisis resilience

BL Bureau
CHENNAI

Celebrating MSMEs, *The Hindu businessline* brings its 5th annual MSME Conclave to two cities. After kicking off in Bengaluru on June 25, it reaches Coimbatore on June 27 where it will focus on financing strategies to aid small firms navigate crisis and shift to clean mobility.

It will discuss MSMEs' contribution to the Indian growth story. The theme for Coimbatore event is 'Resilient Routes: Financing MSMEs from Crisis to Clean Mobility'. Keynote speaker is Jairam Varadaraj, MD, ELGI Equipments.

Businessline Editor Raghuvir Srinivasan will address the audience.

The event will have two panel discussions and a fireside chat. There will be a special address on 'Kerala: Your next investment destination'. The first panel will discuss 'Financing in times of war' and have Karthikeyan Mounaguruswamy, immediate past President, CODISSIA; Rahul Jyothi Kumaran, Head-SME business, Sundaram Finance and Kumar Duraiswamy, CEO, Eastern Global Clothing and Joint Secretary, Tiruppur Exporters Association and session moderated by Lokeshwarri S. K., Data Editor, *The Hindu businessline*.

The second panel is on 'The Clean Mobility Opportunity for MSMEs'. The panellists include Dr. S. Chandrasekar, Corporate Director - Roots Group of Companies, Founder Trustee & VP - Society for Smart E-mobility; Shreshth Mishra, Co-founder & Chief People Officer, Simple Energy and Sudeepth Puthumana, Head of Mobility, L&T Electronic Products and Systems with the session moderated by Ramesh M, Consulting Editor, *The Hindu businessline*.

The fireside chat with Ravichandran Purushothaman, Chairman-CII Southern Region and President, Danfoss India will be hosted by Richa Mishra, Resident Editor, *The Hindu businessline*. A special address on 'Kerala: Your next investment destination' will be given by Arun K. Vijayan, IAS, Director, Industries and MD, KSIDC.

The conclave is co-powered by Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation and the Central Bank of India. The Associate Partners are Bank of Baroda, Tally, SSVM Institutions, Indian Overseas Bank, Salzer, South Indian Bank, Turbo Engineering, Zorian Systems, Suguna Pumps & Motors, Malles Construction, eRoyce Motors India, and Ruh Continuum School. The Realty Partner is G Square and Lifestyle Partner is Lexus.

Govt. eases Quality Control Order rules

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

The Union government has eased the most stringent aspects of the Quality Control Orders (QCOs) it has passed for various sectors, allowing manufacturers to use an alternative mechanism to transition to the more stringent version over the course of five years.

From 2020, the government has been issuing QCOs in an attempt to improve the quality standards of Indian manufacturing and protect consumer interests. These standards, however, met with significant opposition from local manufacturers who said the compliance process was long and paperwork arduous.

The latest notification by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, called the Transition Facilitation (Quality Control) Order, 2026, "introduces an alternative risk-based compliance mechanism to facilitate a smooth transition for industry while maintaining quality assurance and consumer protection," the Ministry said.

Basically, the notification allows selected local firms to procure supplies from manufacturers holding licences under the less rigorous Scheme II of Schedule II of the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) regulations, instead of the more rigorous Scheme I.

As per the notification, this relaxation would apply to the QCOs on toys, personal protective footwear, air conditioners, rubber footwear, electric water heaters, washing machines, hinges, furniture, and electrical safety equipment.

Zydus JV to set up $20-mn Lanka unit

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

Zydus Lifesciences and Sunshine Healthcare Lanka have formed a joint venture (JV) to build a $20 million pharmaceutical manufacturing facility in Sri Lanka.

Foundation stone of the nearly four-acre facility of the JV, Zydus Sunshine Lifesciences, at the Board of Investment zone in Horana was laid on Friday.

Coming against the backdrop of Sri Lanka prioritising domestic production in essential sectors, the plant will boost local output, contribute to cut in import dependence and improve access to high-quality medicines.

It would make pharmaceutical products for Sri Lanka's retail market.

The JV combines Zydus' global pharma making and technical know-how with Sunshine's strong local market presence and healthcare distribution capabilities and would support technology transfer, build local manufacturing capability and create jobs.

BHAKRA BEAS MANAGEMENT BOARD
(A Statutory Body under the Ministry of Power, Government of India)
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For detailed tender, please visit the GeM Portal or **www.bbmb.gov.in.**
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फोन संख्या:– 0291–2651464, फैक्स:– 0291–2641464, ई–मेल:– ceonnj@gmail.com
क्रमांक:– 5193 दिनांक:– 23.06.2026
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U.B. No. DLB2627GLOB08637
Bid For Municipal Corporation Jodhpur For Works (01) Date .....Invited Form Interested Bidders Date 23.06.2026 Upto 14.07.2026 Other Particulars Of The Bid May Be Downloaded On The Procurement Portal **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in**, **http://sppp.raj.nic.in**, Of The State.
उपायुक्त
नगर निगम जोधपुर
राज.संवाद/सी/26/5651

कार्यालय अतिरिक्त मुख्य अभियन्ता, सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग, संभाग-कोटा
क्रमांक : 776 दिनांक : 17.06.2026
निविदा सूचना संख्या-09/ 2026-27
NIB No- PWD2627A1224
राजस्थान के राज्यपाल महोदय की ओर से बारां जिले में बजट घोषणा 2025-26 के अन्तर्गत **ROB पुल का निर्माण कार्य दस साल की मरम्मत के लिए ई.पी.सी. मोड पर 1 कार्य** उपयुक्त श्रेणी में सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग राजस्थान में पंजीकृत संवेदकों एवं राज्य सरकार/ केन्द्र सरकार के अधिकृत संगठनों/ केन्द्रीय लोक निर्माण विभाग/ डाक एवं दूर संचार विभाग/ रेल्वे इत्यादि में पंजीकृत संवेदकों, जो कि राजस्थान सरकार के एए श्रेणी के संवेदकों के समकक्ष हो, से निर्धारित प्रपत्र में ई-प्रोक्यूरमेन्ट प्रक्रिया से ऑन लाईन निविदायें आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। निविदा से सम्बन्धित विवरण वेब साईट http://dipr.rajasthan.gov.in व http://pwd.rajasthan.gov.in http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in पर देखा जा सकता है। यू.बी.एन संख्या निम्नानुसार है।
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UBN NO. PWD2627WLOB05240
DIPR/C/11028/26
अतिरिक्त मुख्य अभियन्ता
सा.नि.वि. सम्भाग कोटा

E-mail:- acezljpr.pwd@rajasthan.gov.in
OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER PWD ZONE-I JAIPUR
PWD Campus, Jacob Road, Infront of Jaipur Club, Jaipur (O) 0141-2223525
No.: ACE-I/Zone-I/NIT No. 03/2026-27/D-547 Date: 18/06/2026
NOTICE INVITING BID
Budget Announcement 2026-27 widening and strengthening road work of Jhunjhunu District is invited from interested bidders from dated 22.06.2026 at 09:30 AM upto dated 13.07.2026 at 06:00 PM, other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.raj.nic.in) of the state; and pwd.rajasthan.gov.in departmental website. The approximate value of the procurement is **Rs. 3296.71 lacs.**
NIB No. .....

S.N.	District	Name of Work	UBN No.
1	Jhunjhunu	रामपुरा से डाबड़ी धीर सिंह तक डामर सड़क चौड़ाईकरण एवं सुदृढ़ीकरण कार्य।	PWD2627 WLOB05341
2	Jhunjhunu	सुदृढ़ीकरण एवं चौड़ाईकरण कार्य डाडाफतेहपुरा-नालपुर-गौरीर-रामबास तक सड़क	PWD2627 WLOB05342
3	Jhunjhunu	गाड़ाखेड़ा -शाहपुर- श्यामपुरा मैनाना-पालोता-बुहाना सड़क चौड़ाईकरण एवं सुदृढ़ीकरण कार्य।	PWD2627 WLOB05343
4	Jhunjhunu	सूरजगढ–स्वामी सेही-तोला सेही-डालमियों की ढाणी (चिड़ावा एनएच-11 न्यू) तक सड़क चौड़ाईकरण एवं सुदृढ़ीकरण कार्य।	PWD2627 WLOB05344

(Anupam Gupta)
Additional Chief Engineer
PWD Zone-I Jaipur
DIPR/C/11114/26

कृषि विश्वविद्यालय, जोधपुर
जोधपुर 342304, राजस्थान, भारत
ई-निविदा 05/2026-27
कृषि विश्वविद्यालय, जोधपुर द्वारा Rate Contract of Chemical, Glassware, Plasticware and Other Lab Consumables की आपूर्ति करने हेतु ऑनलाईन ई–निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा संबंधी विस्तृत विवरण एवं जानकारी **www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in** एवं **https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in** पर उपलब्ध है।
UBN NO. : JAU2627GLRC00060
राज.संवाद/सी/26/5699
नियंत्रक (वित्त)

GOVERNMENT OF RAJASTHAN
OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER, RAJASTHAN BHAWAN
Plot No. 21-22, Sector 30A, Vashi, Navi Mumbai-400703
Tel. No. 022-27811790/27811194/27811195, Email:rbvashi@rajasthan.gov.in
No.: RBV/2026-27/NIB/40 Date: 19.06.2026
Notice inviting Bid-01
Bids for Providing following Services at Rajasthan Bhawan, Vashi are invited from interested Bidders. Other particulars of the Bid may be viewed on the procurement portal **(http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in** and **http://sppp.raj.nic.in)** of the state.

Sr. No	Bid Detail	Last date & Time for submitting of E-Bid	Portal	UBN No./E-Proc Bid ID No
1	Facility Operation Services	13-07-2026 Up to 05.00 PM	E-Proc	2026_GAD_569471_1
			SPPP	GAD2627SLRC00005
2	Security Services	04-07-2026 Up to 05.00 PM	E-Proc	2026_GAD_569497_1
			SPPP	GAD2627SLRC00006

General Manager
DIPR/C/11181/2026 Rajasthan Bhawan, Vashi, Navi Mumbai

RajCOMP Info Services Limited (RISL)
C-Block, 1st Floor, Yojana Bhawan, Tilak Marg, C-Scheme, Jaipur
RISL invites e-bids from the eligible bidders for the following:

NIB No./ Date/ Unique bid no.	Particulars	Estimated Cost/EMD	Start of sale / Last date
RIS2627A0036/ 22.06.2026 RIS2627SLOB00032	RFP - Selection for System Integrator for Wildlife Surveillance & Anti - Poaching System (National Chambal Sanctuary) in Rajasthan Including Operation & Maintenance for a Period of five Years based on Open Competitive Bidding through e-Procurement / e-Tender.	Rs. 40 Cr.	22.06.2026 / 22.07.2026

Details can be seen on the websites **http://risl.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in, http://doitc.rajasthan.gov.in.** Bids are to be submitted through **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in**
Raj.Samwad/C/26/5690
Technical Director

JAIPUR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Indira Circle, Jawahar Lal Nehru Marg, Jaipur-302004
S. No : JDA/EE & TA to Dir. Engg.-I/2026-27/D- Dated : 25.06.2026
NOTICE INVITING BID
NIB No.: EE & TA to Dir. Engg.-I/13/2026-27
Bids are invited from interested bidders for following works :-

S. No.	UBN No.	Cost of Work (Lacs)	Nature of Work	Last Date
1	JDA2627WSOB00162	453.32	Electric Work	03.07.2026

Other particulars of the respective bid may be visited on Procurement Portal website www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in, www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in and www.jda.rajasthan.gov.in.
Executive Engineer & TA to Dir.Engg-I
Raj.Samwad/C/26/5760

BEIRUT

Hezbollah chief says Israel must 'unconditionally' leave Lebanon

REUTERS

Hezbollah leader Naim Qassem on Friday said Israel has "no option" but to withdraw from Lebanese areas it occupies, adding that the Iran-U.S. deal that reduced fighting with Israel was an American-Israeli defeat. "Israel has no option but to withdraw completely from every inch of our Lebanese land," he said. AFP

WASHINGTON

Lebanon, Israel, U.S. sign trilateral framework accord in Washington

REUTERS

Lebanon, Israel and the U.S. on Friday signed a trilateral framework agreement aimed at paving the way for a peace deal between the two long-time West Asia adversaries. Lebanon's ambassador to Washington, Nada Hamadeh Moawad, said the accord "is a first step on the road to restoring Lebanese sovereignty". AFP

GREENBELT

Ex-Trump adviser Bolton pleads guilty in classified documents case

AP

John Bolton, a former national security adviser for U.S. President Donald Trump who has since become one of his fiercest critics, pleaded guilty in federal court on Friday to mishandling classified information and faces up to five years in prison. "I'm sorry for it," Mr. Bolton said during the hearing. REUTERS

BRUSSELS

EU proposes to refuse military-age Ukrainian men refugee protection

REUTERS

The EU on Friday proposed stopping granting Ukrainian men of fighting age refugee protection to settle in the bloc, while extending the right beyond 2027 for others from the country. Brussels said the change follows a request from Kyiv, whose army has struggled with manpower shortages as Russia's war grinds into a fifth year. AFP

'China's Bangladesh ties doesn't target third party'

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

China's relation with Bangladesh does not "target" a third party, China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said on Friday. The remark came soon after China expressed support for Bangladesh's Teesta River Comprehensive Management and Restoration Project and said it will expedite a feasibility study.

The discussion on the Teesta river took place during Bangladesh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's first official visit to China. Mr. Rahman was hosted by Premier Li Qiang and had a meeting with President Xi Jinping during June 25-26.

Mr. Xi, during his meeting with Mr. Rahman, assured that China will remain a "trusted friend" of Bangladesh and help in implementing the development plans of the BNP government. Mr. Rahman on his part conveyed Bangladesh's commitment to "one China policy".

Xi Jinping

The two sides expressed support for "high quality cooperation" as part of the Belt and Road Initiative and work jointly towards modernisation. China supported greater role for Bangladesh in multilateral organisations like the UN, and supported "Bangladesh to participate in the BRICS" and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.

Mr. Rahman appreciated zero-tariff treatment for 100% tariff lines, and said Dhaka will help facilitate greater Chinese investments. The two sides agreed to advance modernisation of the Mongla port and develop a Chinese Economic and Industrial Zone (CEIZ) in Chittagong.

China also appreciated Bangladesh for hosting the Rohingya refugees of the Rakhine state who were evicted by Myanmar in 2017. China expressed support for "friendly consultation" with Myanmar and Bangladesh to settle the refugee crisis. The joint statement on the matter, however, did not use the term "Rohingya" and used "forcibly displaced people from Rakhine state of Myanmar".

Iran reasserts its right to control shipping in Hormuz after vessel hit

Tehran says U.S. military presence in the Gulf is the source of regional insecurity and division, and that the Hormuz Strait should be governed by Iran and Oman; state media says three tankers attempting 'unauthorised passage' were turned back

Reuters
DUBAI/LONDON

Tehran reasserted its right on Friday to control shipping in the Strait of Hormuz and warned Gulf states against siding with the U.S., a day after an attack on a ship near Oman highlighted the fragility of a preliminary deal to end the Iran war.

Iran was responding to what it called an "interventionist, irresponsible and provocative" joint statement by the U.S. and six Gulf states that rejected Iran's insistence that it could charge tolls on vessels transiting the strait.

"Safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz cannot be guaranteed under ambiguous arrangements, parallel routes or decision-making that does not take Iran's role as a coastal state into account," Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi said on X.

Dangerous passage: Vessels at the Strait of Hormuz, as seen from Musandam, Oman, on Friday. REUTERS

Underlining the risks facing shipping, Iranian state TV later reported that three foreign tankers attempting what it called an "unauthorised passage" of the strait were turned back after a warning from the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

Rubio in the Gulf

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio – wrapping up a tour of the Gulf to reassure nervous regional allies about the interim pact – told presspersons on Thursday that if Iran threatened or blocked ships in the strait, "we're going to have a problem".

In their joint statement, Mr. Rubio and the GCC called for "free, unconditional, and unrestricted navigation" in the strait without tolls or "attempts to assert control", and said a lasting peace must address Iran's ballistic missiles, drones and support for proxy groups. Iran's Foreign Ministry responded on Friday by saying the U.S. military presence in the Gulf was the source of regional insecurity and division, and that the strait should be governed by Iran and Oman in line with the terms of the interim deal.

Ali Akbar Velayati, top adviser to Iran's Supreme Leader, issued a warning to Washington's Gulf allies.

"The stability of the Persian Gulf Arab states is indebted to Iran's century-long management of the Strait of Hormuz... their strategic survival is at the mercy of Tehran's tolerance," Mr. Velayati said.

OpenAI defers public rollout of GPT 5.6 as U.S. seeks early access

Reuters
NEW YORK

OpenAI said on Friday it was delaying a full public launch of GPT-5.6 at the U.S. government's request, limiting the AI model's initial access to a small group of vetted partners. The decision underscores growing concern in Washington over national security risks posed by powerful AI systems.

OpenAI said in a blog post that the limited release was a temporary step as it works with Washington on a broader framework for future launches.

President Donald Trump signed an executive order earlier this month establishing a voluntary framework for AI developers to offer "covered frontier models" to the U.S. government for up to 30 days before releasing them to trusted partners.

"We are taking this short-term step as we believe it is the strongest path to broader availability in the coming weeks, while we work with the Administration to develop the cyber Executive Order framework," OpenAI said.

Earlier this month, the U.S. government ordered Anthropic to suspend access to its frontier AI models for foreign nationals, citing security concerns.

Venezuela twin earthquakes toll rises to 920, says official

Agence France-Presse
LA GUAIRA

The death toll from two twin earthquakes that devastated Venezuela earlier this week rose to 920 on Friday, National Assembly President Jorge Rodriguez said.

In a televised address, Mr. Rodriguez updated the death toll that had previously been at 589, as rescuers boosted by international teams raced to find survivors beneath collapsed buildings.

Rescuers used heavy machinery but also just bare hands in a race to pluck out people caught under rubble in the earthquake zone west of the capital Caracas.

Jorge Rodriguez

At one of the flattened buildings, *AFP* saw workers using sledgehammers to break the debris and calling for "absolute silence" to detect cries from survivors. However, the abrupt increase in the official toll was only expected to keep rising.

"Regrettably, we now have 589 people who died," Interim President Delcy Rodriguez told a televised meeting earlier in the day. The previous official toll had been 235, while Health Minister Carlos Alvarado said late Thursday that another 4,300 people were listed as injured.

Help has begun to arrive, with Salvadoran, Swiss and Mexican rescue teams already on the ground, as well as a senior U.S. military official landing in Caracas to oversee Washington's relief efforts.

Nations around the world have pledged to send rescuers, money and aid, with the United States saying it was deploying two warships, transport planes and helicopters, and mobilising $150 million in aid.

Ebola deaths top 300 in DR Congo

KINSHASA

The Ebola epidemic has claimed more than 300 lives in the Democratic Republic of Congo, a little over one month after it was declared, health authorities said on Friday. AFP

Andhra Pradesh State Co-operative Marketing Federation Limited
AP Markfed
D.No.56-2-11, Phase 3rd, MARKFED Lay at No.49/84, APIIC Colony Road, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada-520007. E.mail: micro.apmarkfed@gmail.com - webpage: https://apmarkfed.ap.gov.in/

SHORT eTENDER NOTIFICATION

AP MARKFED invites short e-Tender bids from experienced, reputed and financially sound manufacturers for supply of (1) PP Chemicals, Weedicides & Bio Pesticides, (2) Pheromone Traps & Lures, (3) Micronutrient products & Water Soluble Fertilisers, (4) Supply/ transportation of Gypsum both bulk & bagged to all the 28-districts of Andhra Pradesh. Both technical and financial quotations / bids should be submitted online only at **https://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in**. Full details of Short e-Tender Notification and respective Tender Schedules (RFPs) are available w.e.f. **27.06.2026** on **https://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in**.

Notice No.: APMF-2559296 **Sd/- MANAGING DIRECTOR**

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Crimea declares 'emergency' amid Ukrainian strikes as Russia downs 660 drones overnight

Agence France-Presse
MOSCOW

Authorities in Russian-annexed Crimea on Friday declared an "emergency situation" in a bid to ease the fallout from increasing Ukrainian aerial attacks on the peninsula.

The announcement comes amid fuel shortages and power cuts triggered by the Ukrainian attacks on logistics chains and oil facilities across Crimea, the rest of Russian-held Ukraine and southern Russia.

"A decision has been made... to sign decrees declaring a regional-level emergency situation in the Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol," the Moscow-installed governor Sergey Aksyonov said in a post on Telegram.

The emergency situation would allow for a "rapid resolution of tasks related to ensuring the stable operation of all sectors", Mr. Aksyonov said.

Kyiv has stepped up its air attacks that it calls fair retribution for Russia's near-daily barrages on Ukrainian civilians and energy infrastructure since Moscow launched its offensive in February 2022.

Barrage of drones

Russian air defences shot down 660 Ukrainian drones overnight, including over the capital Moscow and the annexed Crimea, its Defence Ministry said on Friday, one of the highest figures since the start of the conflict.

A Ukrainian serviceman of the Khartia brigade controls a drone in the command centre in the Kharkiv region in Ukraine on Friday. AP

Drones were destroyed over more than a dozen regions, including the Russian capital and the annexed Crimean Peninsula, the Black Sea, and the Sea of Azov, the Ministry said on Russia's Max platform.

Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin, said at least 47 drones heading toward the capital were intercepted.

"Emergency services specialists are working where the debris fell," Sobyanin said on Telegram, without reporting any casualties or damage.

Ukraine mostly targets Russian oil processing and export facilities in a bid to deprive the Kremlin of a source of revenue crucial for financing Moscow's war effort.

Last week, Kyiv's attack caused a major fire at a refinery in the southeast of Moscow, shrouding the suburbs in plumes of thick black smoke.

Mr. Aksyonov had a day earlier acknowledged that Crimea "is going through a challenging time" and that "the fuel situation is the most difficult".

He also conceded that the Russian army were unable to fully protect the peninsula.

COMMANDING SHOW

Netherlands tops Group F with a facile victory over Tunisia

REUTERS

The Netherlands sealed top spot in Group F of the FIFA World Cup with a facile 3-1 victory over Tunisia at the Kansas City Stadium on Thursday. The Dutch finished the group stage unbeaten with two wins and a draw, while Tunisia bowed out of the tournament without a point and a goal difference of -10.

LEARNING CURVE

Germany committed 'tactical blunders', says Nagelsmann

GETTY IMAGES

Germany head coach Julian Nagelsmann said that his side committed "tactical blunders" against Ecuador. "We got off to a great start. Unfortunately, right after scoring, we started committing tactical blunders with our positioning. That makes things difficult. Ecuador had everything to play for, and you could tell".

NEW CHALLENGE

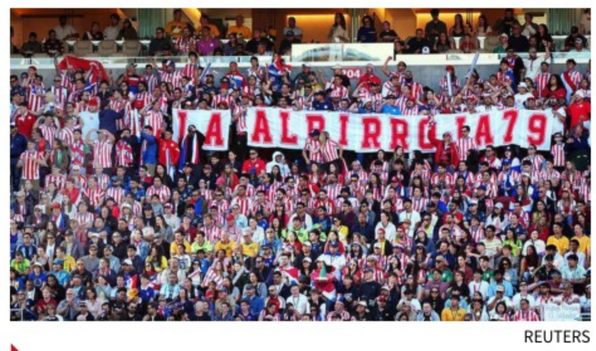
Canada set to become first WC host to play away from home

AFP

Canada is set to become the first World Cup host to play away from home. Canada's 1-2 defeat to Switzerland in Group B on Wednesday set up a round-of-32 game against South Africa in Los Angeles. The other co-hosts of the 2026 World Cup, the USA and Mexico, won their groups and will play the first knockout round at home.

FANFARE

Ongoing tournament becomes most-attended edition in history



REUTERS

The ongoing World Cup set a new record during the Group E match between Germany and Ecuador in New Jersey, becoming the most-attended edition in the tournament's history. It surpassed the 1994 mark of 35,87,538 spectators. During the Germany-Ecuador encounter, the screens displayed the latest record of 36,05,357.

Draw does the job for both Japan and Sweden

Letting it rip: Elanga fires in Sweden's equaliser with a curling left-footer. GETTY IMAGES

Ayon Sengupta
DALLAS

Long after the final whistle, beneath the five Super Bowl championship banners that honour the Dallas Cowboys, the Japanese supporters were still at work, cleaning the stands in a ritual that has become as much a part of World Cups as the football.

Their team, too, was just as tidy on the pitch as a disciplined 1-1 draw with Sweden was good enough to book its place in the knockout rounds.

Daizen Maeda, brought into the side ahead of Junya Ito, showed his industry early, winning the ball in midfield before driving forward on a dazzling run. Only a last-ditch tackle from Gabriel Gudmundsson inside the box stopped the Japanese midfielder's charge.

With one eye on the other Group F game in Kansas, where the Netherlands compounded Tunisia's misery with a 3-1 win, Japan was happy to cede possession and rely on quick feet and sharp movement to raid the Swedish defence on the counter. Maeda came close again in the 22nd minute but failed to direct his header after Hiroki Ito had delivered a measured out-swinging cross. With a draw serving the interests of both sides, the game drifted into a lull as the half wore on after the hydration recharge. The sips of energy drink, it seemed, brought more heaviness than haste, adding lethargy to the legs instead of restoring their vigour.

Yet, just as the half meandered towards the interval, Maeda sparked it back to life. He exchanged a neat one-two with Keito Nakamura, who curled an effort beyond the backtracking Victor Lindelof. Jacob Widell Zetterstrom, preferred in goal after Kristoffer Nordfeldt's five-goal ordeal against the Netherlands, reacted sharply to tip away the shot.

With the first half whistle nearing, there was a sudden spurt of activity as Viktor Gyokeres's effort was deflected away for a corner-kick on the other side.

Maeda was finally rewarded in the 56th minute, as he reached Ritsu Doan's pass ahead of Alexander Bernhardsson before placing his finish into the corner, past Zetterstrom.

Sweden's response was almost immediate as Anthony Elanga ripped a curling left-footed effort from outside the box into the far corner of Zion Suzuki's goal. The brilliance reduced the Japanese goalkeeper, who reacted a tad late, to a helpless onlooker. Suzuki, however, had his own moment soon after, producing a sharp save to keep out Alexander Isak. He was again there to deny Elanga and then Isak, in quick succession, during stoppage time.

At the final whistle, both sides looked relieved as they had achieved what they had come looking for. Japan finished with its unbeaten record intact, while Sweden recovered from its Dutch bruising, with the result carrying both safely into the last 32 of the competition.

The standings

GROUP F	M	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Points
Netherlands (Q)	3	2	1	0	10	4	6	**7**
Japan (Q)	3	1	2	0	7	3	4	**5**
Sweden (Q)	3	1	1	1	7	7	0	**4**
Tunisia (E)	3	0	0	3	2	12	-10	**0**

Q: Qualified | **E:** Eliminated — Source: FIFA

Ecuador squeezes into last 32 with upset win over Germany

The European powerhouse takes the lead in controversial circumstances before Angulo and Plata do the trick for the South Americans; Ivory Coast also progresses to the knockouts after ending Curacao's fairytale

FIFA WORLD CUP

Agence France-Presse
EAST RUTHERFORD

Ecuador squeezed into the last 32 of the World Cup with an upset 2-1 victory over Germany on Thursday while Ivory Coast ended Curacao's fairytale campaign to seal its passage to the knockouts.

A nailbiting Group E game between Ecuador and group winner Germany at the MetLife Stadium was settled 13 minutes from time, when Gonzalo Plata jabbed home the winning goal from close-range.

Plata's winner was the highlight of Ecuador's comeback – Germany took a second-minute lead from a controversial Leroy Sane goal before the South Americans equalised through Nilson Angulo. Ecuador finished with four points, guaranteeing it a place in the last 32 as one of the eight best third-placed teams.

"The significance of this is not for me, it is for the people," Ecuador coach Sebastian Beccacece said. "Life is different now. We suffered a lot," said Plata. "We suffered too much in the first two matches. We would have liked to secure qualification much earlier, but now we are going forward more hungry."

Germany had already won the group after victories over Ivory Coast and Curacao. Ivory Coast, meanwhile, sealed the runner-up spot in the pool after eliminating Curacao in Philadelphia, with Nicolas Pepe scoring twice in a 2-0 victory. It is the first time that the west African nation has reached the knockout stage.

Curacao departs with one point to finish bottom of the group.

THE RESULTS

Group E: Curacao 0 lost to Ivory Coast 2 (Pepe 7, 64); Ecuador 2 (Angulo 9, Plata 77) bt Germany 1 (Sane 2).
Group F: Japan 1 (Maeda 56) drew with Sweden 1 (Elanga 62); Tunisia 1 (Mastouri 54) lost to Netherlands 3 (Skhiri 3-og, Brobbey 7, van Hecke 62).
Group D: Paraguay 0 drew with Australia 0; Turkey 3 (Guler 10, Yilmaz 31, Ayhan 90+8) bt USA 2 (Trusty 3, Berhalter 49).

Fightback complete: Plata, jersey No. 19, scores Ecuador's winner. GETTY IMAGES

The standings

GROUP E	M	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Points
Germany (Q)	3	2	0	1	10	4	6	**6**
Ivory Coast (Q)	3	2	0	1	4	2	2	**6**
Ecuador (Q)	3	1	1	1	2	2	0	**4**
Curacao (E)	3	0	1	2	1	9	-8	**1**

Q: Qualified | **E:** Eliminated — Source: FIFA

The standings

GROUP D	M	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Points
USA (Q)	3	2	0	1	8	4	4	**6**
Australia (Q)	3	1	1	1	2	2	0	**4**
Paraguay	3	1	1	1	2	4	-2	**4**
Turkiye (E)	3	1	0	2	3	5	-2	**3**

Q: Qualified | **E:** Eliminated — Source: FIFA

Australia sails and Paraguay waits

Reuters
SANTA CLARA

Australia booked its spot in the World Cup knockouts on Thursday after a physical 0-0 Group D draw against Paraguay, which must wait to learn its fate as a third-placed finisher.

In a stop-start game fraught with wayward tackles and poor finishing, it was Australia which had most of the chances, with Cristian Volpato and Jackson Irvine forcing saves from the 'keeper and Jordan Bos twice going painfully close late in the game.

Meanwhile, Christian Pulisic's lively cameo in the United States' 2-3 loss to Turkiye was a timely reminder of how crucial it is for the co-host to keep its talisman fit as it targets a deep run at the World Cup.

Turkiye beat a second-string U.S. side with a last-gasp goal from Kaan Ayhan at the Los Angeles Stadium for its first win of the tournament.

Its opponent had already secured top spot.

Confirmed round of 32 games
South Africa vs. Canada; Brazil vs. Japan; Netherlands vs. Morocco; USA vs. Bosnia and Herzegovina

Celebration time: Australia finished second in Group D. REUTERS

Argentina likely to shuffle its pack for final group game

Ayon Sengupta
DALLAS

Lionel Scaloni has changed little so far at this World Cup. Between Argentina's first two matches, the coach made only one alteration to his starting lineup, preferring continuity.

But after wins over Algeria and Austria, Scaloni's challenge now is about protecting legs and giving minutes to the rest of his squad while still carrying the momentum into the knockouts as his team takes on Jordan in its final Group J game.

"The idea is to give most players a chance to play. I think they deserve it and, whenever the match allows it, we will do so," Scaloni said.

The main question, inevitably, concerns Lionel Messi. The Argentina captain, who turned 39 on Wednesday, has scored all five of his team's goals so far.

Having recently recovered from a muscle strain, Messi could be rested, with Como's Nico Paz among those in line to step up.

Giuliano Simeone is another who may come into the side, while Thiago Almada could retain his place on the left.

In midfield, Leandro Paredes and Exequiel Palacios are options to give Enzo Fernandez and Alexis Mac Allister a breather.

There could be changes in defence as well. Cristian Romero suffered a knee injury against Austria and, although he has played down concerns, Argentina is unlikely to take risks.

Nicolas Otamendi could replace him, while Marcos Senesi may come in to give Lisandro Martinez a rest.

The full backs may remain unchanged to offer stability, with Emiliano Martinez expected to continue in goal.

Jordan, meanwhile, has little choice but to suffer without the ball. Jamal Sellami's side is expected to sit deep with a back three and stay compact as it tries to contain Argentina.

The world champion will dominate possession regardless of Scaloni's starting XI. But it remains to be seen how quickly its reshuffled attack can find a way through Jordan's low block.

Stat attack

1 Berhalter became the first American man to score and assist in the same World Cup game

1m 49s Sane scored the second fastest World Cup goal after Ernest Lahner (25 seconds) in 1934

2 Pepe became the second Ivory Coast player to net a brace in the football showpiece (after Dindane vs. Serbia & Montenegro in 2006)

3 Maeda became the third Japanese to find the back of the net in multiple World Cups (after Honda and Okazaki)

3 Brobbey became the third player to score with each of his first three shots in the mega event after Hungary's Laszlo Kiss (1982) and Colombia's Yerry Mina (2018)

4 Sweden's goals from outside the box in this edition, at least twice as many as any other team. It is the first to score four from outside the box in the group stages since Brazil in 2006

10 Netherlands has advanced from the group stages in each of its 10 appearances at the World Cup, the best by a side in history

13 Ecuador broke a 13-year wait for a win against an opponent from Europe (3-2 vs. Portugal, 2013)

21y 120d Guler became the youngest to score for Turkiye in the World Cup

22 Neuer pulled level with Matthaus and Klose for most starts by a German in the marquee tournament

173 Trusty's strike was the 173rd of this edition, breaking the record for most goals in a tournament (172 in Qatar in 2022)

Compiled by **ANIRUDH VELAMURI**

Table and fixtures

As the teams head into their final group games, a look at how they are placed and who they meet

GROUP J	M	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Points
Argentina (Q)	2	2	0	0	5	0	5	**6**
Austria	2	1	0	1	3	3	0	**3**
Algeria	2	1	0	1	2	4	-2	**3**
Jordan (E)	2	0	0	2	2	5	-3	**0**

Sunday's matches: Algeria vs. Austria and Jordan vs. Argentina, both 7.30 a.m. IST

GROUP K	M	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Points
Colombia (Q)	2	2	0	0	4	1	3	**6**
Portugal	2	1	1	0	6	1	5	**4**
DR Congo	2	0	1	1	1	2	-1	**1**
Uzbekistan	2	0	0	2	1	8	-7	**0**

Sunday's matches: Colombia vs. Portugal and DR Congo vs. Uzbekistan, both 5 a.m. IST

GROUP L	M	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Points
England	2	1	1	0	4	2	2	**4**
Ghana	2	1	1	0	1	0	1	**4**
Croatia	2	1	0	1	3	4	-1	**3**
Panama (E)	2	0	0	2	0	2	-2	**0**

Sunday's matches: Panama vs. England and Croatia vs. Ghana, both 2.30 a.m. IST

Q: Qualified | **E:** Eliminated | * The top two from each group and the eight best third-placed sides will advance to the round of 32

Ireland gives India a reality check with a shock victory

The visiting team's batters, barring opener Abhishek, struggle to adapt to a pacy pitch as the Men in Blue go down by 34 runs; skipper Tucker and Delany star with the bat for the host; Sooryavanshi made to wait for his debut

INDIA IN IRELAND

Press Trust of India
BELFAST

Immaculate Ireland bowlers gnawed on Indian batters' impatience on a pacy pitch, earning a historic 34-run victory in the first T20I here on Friday.

It was Ireland's first-ever victory over India in any format, and the host has now taken a 1-0 lead in the two-match series.

Chasing 183 on a surface that had enough assistance for quick bowlers was not improbable but it needed a pragmatic approach after the PowerPlay.

But none of them had the patience as India was bowled out for 148 in the 19th over despite opener Abhishek Sharma making a 20-ball 50 (7x4, 2x6).

Debutant pacer Jai Moondra (2/26) inflicted the first blow on his country of origin, eliciting an inside edge onto the stumps from Sanju Samson. Ishan Kishan went for a trademark hack to the leg-side off Matt Hollard (3/28) and Lorcan Tucker completed a simple catch inside the circle.

Shreyas Iyer's first match as India's full-time T20 skipper went horribly wrong, and his batting failure added to the gloom. Shreyas attempted a flick off Hollard but could not impart force or distance to the pace-off delivery, getting caught in the deep by George Dockrell. India scored 68 in the PowerPlay but lost three wickets.

The home side strengthened its chances when Abhishek found Ben Calitz with surgical precision through a pull off Liam McCarthy.

The smiles in the Ireland camp only widened once Tilak Varma and Shivam Dube went without making much of an impact.

Earlier, the Indian pacers stuck to hard lengths and preyed on the aggressive tendencies of the Ireland batters, limiting them to 182 for nine.

The much-anticipated international debut for teen sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi did not happen, but the full house at Stormont ground had enough to cheer for as India, led by Harshit Rana (3/24), dominated for a large part.

Ireland skipper Tucker struck a half-century (50, 36b, 5x4, 2x6) and Gareth Delany (49, 32b, 3x4, 3x6), however, guided the home team to a competitive score.

A day to cherish: Ireland players exult after beating India for the first time in any format. GETTY IMAGES

SCOREBOARD

IRELAND
Tim Tector c Shreyas b Harshit 17 *(12b, 2x4, 1x6)*, Ross Adair c Samson b Harshit 12 *(7b, 2x4)*, Harry Tector c Samson b Arshdeep 0 *(3b)*, Lorcan Tucker c Tilak b Harshit 50 *(36b, 5x4, 2x6)*, Ben Calitz c Prasidh b Dube 15 *(11b, 2x6)*, Gareth Delany c Axar b Arshdeep 49 *(32b, 3x4, 3x6)*, George Dockrell c Arshdeep b Axar 19 *(10b, 2x4, 1x6)*, Liam McCarthy c Tilak b Axar 7 *(5b, 1x4)*, Matthew Humphreys run out 2 *(3b)*, Jai Moondra (not out) 2 *(2b)*; Extras (lb-3, nb-1, w-5): 9; Total (for nine wkts. in 20 overs): 182.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-20 (Adair, 1.5 overs), 2-25 (Harry, 2.6), 3-30 (Tim, 3.4), 4-51 (Calitz, 7.1), 5-115 (Tucker, 14.3), 6-164 (Dockrell, 17.1), 7-178 (Delany, 18.6), 8-178 (McCarthy, 19.1), 9-182 (Humphreys, 19.6).

INDIA BOWLING
Arshdeep 4-0-28-2, Harshit 4-0-24-3, Prasidh 4-0-57-0, Dube 3-0-18-1, Axar 4-0-33-2, Washington 1-0-19-0.

INDIA
Abhishek Sharma c Calitz b McCarthy 50 *(20b, 7x4, 2x6)*, Sanju Samson b Moondra 5 *(4b, 1x4)*, Ishan Kishan c Tucker b Hollard 1 *(5b)*, Shreyas Iyer c Dockrell b Hollard 3 *(7b)*, Tilak Varma c Adair b Humphreys 19 *(21b, 3x4)*, Washington Sundar c Calitz b Hollard 9 *(12b)*, Shivam Dube c & b Moondra 25 *(14b, 1x4, 2x6)*, Axar Patel c Tim b Delany 15 *(16b, 1x4)*, Harshit Rana c Calitz b Humphreys 8 *(9b, 1x6)*, Arshdeep Singh c Tim b Humphreys 2 *(4b)*, Prasidh Krishna (not out) 1 *(2b)*; Extras (lb-2, nb-1, w-7): 10; Total (in 18.5 overs): 148.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-16 (Samson, 1.1), 2-45 (Kishan, 3.2), 3-60 (Shreyas, 5.1), 4-80 (Abhishek, 7.6), 5-90 (Tilak, 10.2), 6-100 (Washington, 11.6), 7-135 (Dube, 15.6), 8-137 (Axar, 16.5), 9-147 (Harshit, 18.1).

IRELAND BOWLING
Humphreys 3.5-0-38-3, Moondra 4-0-25-2, McCarthy 3-0-29-1, Hollard 4-0-28-3, Harry 3-0-22-0, Delany 1-0-3-1.

Toss: India.
PoM: Hollard.
Ireland won by 34 runs to lead two-match series 1-0.
Second T20I: June 28, Belfast, 6 p.m. IST.

SNAPSHOTS

India cruises past Pakistan

LONDON: The gulf in class was evident as India cruised past Pakistan 7-1 in a lop-sided FIH men's Pro League match on Friday. Sukhjeet Singh (20th minute), Harmanpreet Singh (26th), Hardik Singh (34th-penalty stroke), Jugraj Singh (35th), Abhishek (41st), Rajkumar Pal (44th) and Dilpreet Singh (54th) were on the scoresheet for India. Abu Mahmood (13th) had sounded the boards first, but once India found a way back into the contest, it was just one-way traffic. On Thursday, India had gone down 1-4 to England in a penalty shootout after the teams were locked 2-2 in regulation time.

Nagal enters the final

TARGU MURES (ROMANIA): Sumit Nagal reached his first ATP Challenger final in more than two years by beating Cezar Cretu 6-3, 4-6, 6-1 at the ATP 75 Targu Mures Challenger on Friday.
Nagal will meet Frenchman Felix Balshaw.

Indian shooters on top

SUHL: Indian shooters topped the medals tally at the ISSF Junior World Championship with seven gold through outstanding performances in the pistol and rifle events, despite drawing a blank in shotgun. India finished with 24 medals – seven gold, eight silver and nine bronze – ahead of the Individual Neutral Athletes (AIN), which claimed 14 medals while Italy finished third with 10 medals.

Comeback: India beat Pakistan after losing to England on penalties.

Creditable show: The Indian shooters finished with 24 medals.

Indian spikers in semis

AHMEDABAD: India advanced to the AVC Men's Volleyball Cup semifinals with a perfect record of five victories after it defeated Australia 3-0 (26-24, 25-15, 30-28) in its final Pool A match on Thursday. India will face Pool B's second-placed team in the semifinals.

Rounak shocks Chou

FULLERTON: Rounak Chouhan packed off World No. 6 and top seed Chou Tien Chen of Taiwan 21-17, 26-24 to set up a US Open quarterfinal against Misha Zilberman.

The results (second round):
Men: K. Srikanth bt Lee Zii Jia 21-14, 21-13; Rounak Chouhan bt Chou Tien Chen Chou 21-17, 26-24; **Women:** Tanvi Sharma bt Tung Ciou-Tong 21-12, 21-19; Rakshitha Sree bt Chen Su Yu 21-4, 21-19; Devika Sihag bt Tonrug Saeheng 21-17, 21-19.

Duckett. AFP

Duckett leads England's riposte

NOTTINGHAM: Ben Duckett scored his first century in over a year and Jacob Bethell banished his first-innings blues after returning England captain Ben Stokes sparked a fightback in the third Test against New Zealand at Trent Bridge. England was 223 for two on Friday's second day, 215 runs behind New Zealand's 438.
The scores: New Zealand 438 in 114.5 overs (Latham 151, Conway 157, Stokes 4/70) vs England 223/2 in 45 overs (Duckett 113, Bethell batting 74).

Radha ready to put fielding woes aside

T20 WORLD CUP

P.K. Ajith Kumar
MANCHESTER

Radha Yadav has a new favourite. It is her teammate.

She is all praise for the fellow practitioner of left-arm spin, Shree Charani, the new World No. T20I bowler and leading wicket-taker at the World Cup.

"I have learnt so much from her," said Radha, who took three wickets to help India secure victory in a must-win against Bangladesh at Old Trafford on Thursday. "I see her in the nets, she does everything quietly and nails it in each session."

Radha. GETTY IMAGES

Radha said people did not realise the hard work Shree Charani puts in. "I have seen her keep doing the same thing and have learnt it from her," she said. "She keeps it simple, and doesn't care about anything."

The Bangladesh match was Radha's first at this World Cup. But she had come in as a substitute for the game against South Africa here. And it was a nightmare for her: she dropped two catches.

She dropped another early in the match against Bangladesh, too. Mind you, she is one of the best fielders in the world.

She admitted it was a bad day for her. "I don't have to say much about my fielding," she said. "I have done well in the past, so I have nothing to worry about."

She wasn't the only Indian who struggled with fielding, though. She assured the team was working hard on it.

"Fielding is something we do with great enthusiasm," she said.

"You might have seen how our fielding sessions go. You would see we don't drop a single catch in it. Fielding is something we have worked on for two or three years. It is not really an excuse but it was a bit difficult because of the sun."

She said after the defeat to South Africa, the team had a huddle and everyone motivated each other.

"So we just asked each other to keep smiling," Radha said. "We all are doing our work and one can't do more than that. There is only one thing you can do: help each other, keep each other's spirits up, keep each other calm."

They need that more than ever. Their next must-win game is against the mighty Aussies at Lord's on Sunday.

Today's matches

Bristol, 3 p.m. IST
HEAD-TO-HEAD
Played: 1
Pakistan 1 | Netherlands 0

Bristol, 7 p.m. IST
HEAD-TO-HEAD
Played: 10
West Indies 9 | Ireland 1

The Oval, 11 p.m. IST
HEAD-TO-HEAD
Played: 43
England 34 | New Zealand 9

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 & JIOHOTSTAR

Shirse wins hurdles; Chithravel qualifies

Y.B. Sarangi
BHUBANESWAR

National record holder Tejas Shirse kept his composure to win the men's 110m hurdles title at the National inter-State athletics championships at the Kalinga Stadium here on Friday.

Shirse, who achieved the National mark of 13.27 at the Indian Athletics Series in Ludhiana less than two weeks ago, had qualified for the Asian Games by clocking 13.43 in the heats a day before. In the final, which got delayed by 20 minutes due to three false starts, he maintained his focus to time 13.61 and comfortably claim the gold medal.

"The track was new, there was some rain. The blocks were slipping resulting in false starts. Thankfully, I didn't have problems. At the same meet during the last Asiad selection, my parents and grandmother were present in the stands. I couldn't qualify and it was difficult to see them disappointed," said Shirse.

Double delight: Chithravel won the triple jump gold and also breached the Asian Games qualifying mark. BISWARANJAN ROUT

Praveen Chithravel breached the Asian Games qualifying standard and won the gold by jumping to 16.92m in his first attempt in men's triple jump. "My goal was to qualify. I'm focusing on the process. I'll compete in Europe before going to the Commonwealth Games and then the Asian Games," said Chithravel.

Altogether six triple jumpers, including third and fourth-place finishers Selva Prabhu and Abdulla Aboobacker respectively, three in women's discus throw and two in men's hammer throw, including champion Damneet Singh (69.72m), achieved qualifying marks. However, only two athletes in each event will be picked for the continental showpiece.

Vithya Ramraj clocked 56.69s in women's 400m hurdles heats to make the cut.

The results (finals): Men: 110m hurdles (Asiad Q mark 13.63s): 1. Tejas Shirse (Mah) 13.61, 2. Manav R. (TN) 13.66, 3. Krishik M. (Kar) 13.69; **Hammer (Asiad Q mark 69.12m):** 1. Damneet Singh (Pun) 69.72, 2. Praveen Kumar (Raj) 69.58, 3. Ashish Jakhar (Har) 67.71; **Triple jump (Asiad Q mark 16.28m):** 1. Praveen Chithravel (TN) 16.92, 2. Karthik U. (Ker) 16.8, 3. Selva Prabhu (TN) 16.79; **4x100m relay (Asiad Q mark 38.81s):** 1. Odisha 39.92, 2. Tamil Nadu 40.02, 3. Maharashtra 40.37.
Women: Discus (Asian Q mark 55.48m): 1. Seema (Har) 59.73, 2. Sanya Yadav (Har) 56.05, 3. Nidhi (Har) 55.92; **4x100m relay (Asaid Q mark 45.24s):** 1. Karnataka 44.75, 2. Tamil Nadu 45.07, 3. Maharashtra 46.21; **4x400m mixed relay (Asiad Q mark 3:26.81):** 1. Tamil Nadu 3:23.51, 2. Punjab 3:23.54, 3. Rajasthan 3:23.85;
Half-marathon race walk (Asiad Q mark 1:37:20): 1. Munita Prajapati (UP) 1:45:05, 2. Reshma Patel (UP) 1:45:48, 3. Sejal Singh (Mah) 1:46:31.

Taylor a witness to best of two worlds

P.K. Ajith Kumar
MANCHESTER

Like many people these days, Clare Taylor keeps one eye on the football World Cup in North America and the other, closer home, on the Women's T20 World Cup here in England.

But unlike others - all bar one - she has played in both the World Cups. The incredible Ellyse Perry is well-known for scoring a stunning goal at the 2011 World Cup in Germany, and has won eight cricket World Cups as part of the Australian team.

Taylor was the first one to do it. She played for England at the 1995 World Cup in Sweden. That was two years after she won the cricket World Cup at home. She went on to play four more World Cups.

She is very much part of this T20 World Cup, too. She is working with the ICC's Anti-Corruption Unit.

"It is nice to be associated with cricket and being recognised officially for women like me who played the sport when there was no money or publicity," Taylor told *The Hindu*. "I have enjoyed this T20 World Cup, though I am a traditionalist and prefer Test cricket. Well, there was no T20 cricket when I was playing. It is amazing to see the girls get so many opportunities."

She played as a defender for England. And what happened at that World Cup in Sweden? "We did what England do: we lost to Germany," she says with a straight face. "Gender is no bar when it comes to the football World Cup. We had four teams in our group and we got through to the quarterfinals, where we met Germany."

Taylor. P.K. AJITH KUMAR

Taylor had to eventually leave football and concentrate on cricket, as overseas tours, such as the ones to India, lasted long. So she has, of course, achieved more on the cricket pitch.

A lethal pace bowler, Taylor took 127 international wickets. But one of her most cherished memories is about her batting.

"In the Hyderabad Test against India in 1995, I saved the match batting at No. 11, by playing out for nearly two hours," she says with a proud smile. "Most people saw me go in at 11 and I am sure they were packing the bags thinking it was going to be over soon.

"Debra Stock was my partner and we frustrated the Indian bowlers, who were laughing and joking. Then they were saying, Purni (Purnima Rao) get her out."

Purnima couldn't. Taylor remained nine not out, off 101 balls.

Jyothi targets full fitness and Asiad gold

Y.B. Sarangi
BHUBANESWAR

After successfully making a comeback by qualifying for the Asian Games, hurdler Jyothi Yarraji wants to improve her fitness and perform better at the continental event.

Jyothi, who was out of action for a year due to injuries, timed 13.14s in the women's 100m hurdles heats to make it to the quadrennial event before clocking 12.99 to win the final at the National inter-State athletics meet at the Kalinga Stadium here.

The 26-year-old was determined to retain her 'hurdles queen' tag.

"It was painful for me to sit in my room and watch the action.

"I was expecting 12.6. I prayed everyday to make this happen because I suffered many injuries," said an emotional Jyothi.

She was grateful to her coach James Hillier, the Athletics Director of Reliance Foundation, for his support.

"From the day I got injured, my coach was worried so much. Yesterday (prior to the competition) he wrote a big letter about how hard we worked and gave me my favourite blueberries and toys so that I didn't feel nervous."

The wiry athlete overcame apprehensions about her future and relied on her hard work to make a fine comeback.

"Mentally, I am 10 times stronger than before."

Jyothi, who bagged a silver in the last Asian Games and retained her gold in the 2025 Asian championships, said: "the Asian Games is three months away. I'll focus to become fully fit and win the title."

Jyothi made the cut for the Asian Games by clocking 13.14s in 100m hurdles heats. BISWARANJAN ROUT

While her hurdles performance boosted Jyothi's confidence, her showing in the 200m (24.1 in heats and 24 in the final to be sixth) was below par. Her personal best (23.13) came three years ago.

However, that was not a concern for Hillier.

"Our primary plan for this competition was to qualify in the hurdles. While Jyothi is a strong 200m runner, her limited preparation and the physical and emotional exhaustion from the hurdles meant the 200m served more as a learning experience to keep her grounded.

Symbolic step

"Her hurdles performance was a significant and symbolic step forward... The comeback phase is now behind us, and we are fully focused on this new beginning," said Hillier.

INBRIEF

Skipper de Silva's century rescues Sri Lanka

Dhananjaya de Silva's assured 13th Test hundred anchored a determined Sri Lankan batting effort with the visitors dismissed for 308 just before the close of the first day of the first Test of the two-match series against the West Indies at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium on Thursday. De Silva found support in Dinesh Chandimal, the former captain contributing a 54.

The scores: Sri Lanka 308 in 71.5 overs (Chandimal 54, de Silva 120, Dinusha 43) vs West Indies 0/0 in 1 over.

Toss: West Indies.

Jurel's unbeaten ton takes India-A past 400-run mark

India-A struck twice after skipper Dhruv Jurel's unbeaten 141 (215b, 13x4, 1x6) propelled the visiting team to 452 for six declared in the opening innings of the first unofficial Test against Sri Lanka-A in Galle on Friday. Anshul Kamboj and Yash Thakur bagged a wicket each before SL-A reached 113 for two when the stumps were drawn on day two. Nuwanidu Fernando showed positive intent as he cracked seven fours to score an unbeaten 65, while Ashen Bandara (18 n.o.) was accompanying him at close of play.

The scores: India-A 452/6 decl. in 111.4 overs (Sai Sudharsan 132, Jurel 141 n.o., Rasheed 63, Gunasekara 3/84) vs Sri Lanka-A 113/2 in 31 overs (Fernando 65 n.o.).

LIVE TELECAST

FIFA World Cup: Unite8 Sports 1, 2 & Z5 App, 8.30 a.m. 2.30 & 5 a.m. (Sunday)

England vs New Zealand: Third Test, Day 3, Sony Sports Ten 2 & LIV, 3.30 p.m.

Women's T20 WC: Star Sports 1 & JioHotstar, 3, 7 & 11 p.m.

Formula One: Austrian GP (Qualifying), F1 TV, F1 TV Pro App & FanCode, 7.30 p.m.

WI vs SL: First Test, Day 3, FanCode, 7.30 p.m.

After exorcising Slam ghosts in Paris, Zverev arrives at Wimbledon a confident man

The 29-year-old has warmed up well by reaching the semifinals in Halle, but grass is not his strength; the German has an uninspiring 16-9 win-loss record at the All England Club

TENNIS

N. Sudarshan

The challenge ahead: Zverev feels he is playing good tennis now and wants to show it on the grass court. AP

One of the keys to success is to be at the right place at the right time. Alexander Zverev certainly was when he won his maiden Major at Roland-Garros earlier this month.

Carlos Alcaraz was absent. Jannik Sinner and Novak Djokovic bowed out early. And the German himself was playing some fine tennis on what was – and is – his most productive surface.

The title was his for the taking, and he did not disappoint, fighting off a spirited Flavio Cobolli over five sets in the summit clash.

After three losses in Grand Slam finals, the success in Paris would have brought as much relief as joy.

"It's both," Zverev told *The Hindu* from Halle, Germany. "I was very joyful. But overall, it will not bring many changes. I will continue to practise the same way and play the same way. I love playing tennis and that won't change."

Zverev admitted to having doubts that he would never win a Slam.

In fact, he was in a winning position in two of the three title matches – against Dominic Thiem at the 2020 US Open and versus Alcaraz at the 2024 French Open – but blew both.

"Of course, you have those thoughts. It's normal when you lose three Slam finals. And when you are in your fourth, you have a lot of ghosts in your mind. But in the end, I did it."

The 29-year-old's focus will now shift to Wimbledon, where he is the second seed like at the French Open.

He has warmed up well by reaching the semifinals in Halle, but grass is not his strength.

At the All England Club, he has an uninspiring 16-9 win-loss record and has never progressed beyond the fourth round.

Germany has a great history of grass-court tennis, having produced champions such as Steffi Graf, Boris Becker, Michael Stich and Angelique Kerber. Can Zverev aim to join them?

"It's a difficult surface for me and that will never change," he said.

"But I am happy to accept the challenge, and try and play my best tennis. I feel that I am playing good tennis right now. I just have to show it on a grass court".

Long wait: Serena last played a singles match nearly four years ago. AP

Serena to face Joint on Wimbledon return

Agence France-Presse
LONDON

Serena Williams was on Friday drawn to play Australia's Maya Joint in the Wimbledon first round as the American legend returns to singles action after four years.

Serena retired in 2022 but the 23-time Grand Slam singles champion made a sensational comeback by playing in the Queen's Club and Berlin Open doubles earlier in June.

The 44-year-old was given a wild card entry in the Wimbledon singles – a tournament she has won seven times.

If Serena beats World No. 53 Joint, a 20-year-old who has won just one of her past 14 matches, the American could face 29th seed and rising star Alexandra Eala of the Philippines in the second round.

A victory in the second round would raise the possibility of a potential blockbuster third round tie against reigning champion Iga Swiatek, who starts her title defence against American Taylor Townsend.

Serena, who has been practising at Wimbledon for the past week, last played a singles match nearly four years ago at the US Open in what had appeared to be her farewell to the sport.

She has not played at Wimbledon since losing to Harmony Tan in the first round in 2022.

Her last Grand Slam match was the US Open third round defeat against Ajla Tomljanovic that seemed to have brought the curtain down on her astonishing career.

Serena is also playing in the doubles at Wimbledon with her sister Venus. The pair has won the All England Club doubles six times together.

Sinner vs. Kecmanovic

In the men's singles draw on Friday, defending champion Jannik Sinner was pitted against Serbia's Miomir Kecmanovic.

The World No. 1 has not played since suffering a shock defeat against Juan Manuel Cerundolo in the French Open second round in May.

Carlos Alcaraz is absent as he continues to recover from a wrist injury. Novak Djokovic starts his latest bid for a record 25th Grand Slam title against China's Wu Yibing.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby informed to the General Public that my client **Sri. RAVI BABU V** S/o Venkatramaiah Ramappa, intends to purchase the immovable property more fully described hereunder and hereafter referred to as **"SCHEDULE PROPERTY** from its present Owners/Developer **(1) Smt.N.VEDHAVATHI** W/o Late P.A.Prabhu **(2) Sri.P.HARSHA,** S/o Late P.A.Prabhu **(3) Master ASHITH SWARAN KUMAR H** S/o P.Harsha **(4) Master H.ARNAV SAGAR REDDY** S/o P.Harsha Sl.No.3 & 4 being minors represented by their natural guardian father P.Harsha **(5) Sri.NITESH PRABHU P** S/o Late P.A.Prabhu **(6) Kumari AADVIKA N** D/o Nitesh Prabhu, being minor represented by her natural guardian father Nitesh Prabhu P all are represented by their GPA Holder **M/S SKANDA LAND PROMOTERS PVT LTD., (Developer)** represented by its Director M**s.DEEKSHA RAVISH,** the schedule property is allotted to the share of Developer in terms of registered Modified Joint Development Agreement dated 14.08.2020, vide document bearing No.MDP-1-01931-2020-21 and modified General Power of Attorney dated 14.08.2020 vide document bearing No.MDP-4-00072-2020-21 and in that regard my client has entered into Agreement to Sell with the Owners represented by the Developer.

Any person/s/entity/Bank/financial institution/ authority having any right, title, claim, interest over the schedule property may lodge/ notify/ send his/her/their/its written objections/claims with documentary proof within **07 (Seven) days** from today/this day (date of notification/ publication of this public notice) to the under mentioned-address. If no claims/objections are received/in the absence of any objections/ claims within the above said period, my client shall proceed with the sale transaction and he shall be considered as bonafide purchaser of the schedule property.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All the piece and parcel of residential Plot bearing **No.19** and forming part of residentially converted property measuring 2 Acres, 24 Guntas in the Survey Number 63/1 and 3 Acres 13 Guntas in Survey Number 63/2, totally measuring 5 Acres, 37 Guntas, in the Layout known as **"SKANDA NIRVANA"** and measuring East to West **24.25 + 25.32/2 Mtrs** and North to South **13.40 Meters,** totally measuring **332.11 Sq. Mtrs, BDA Khata PID No.6000011714** situated at **Panathur Village, Varthur Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk, Bangalore Urban District** and bounded on;

East by : Road, West by : Private Property (Sy No. 66), North by : Site No.18, South by : Site No.20 & 21.

ADVOCATE, NAGARJUN.N
No.248, 2nd Floor, 10th Main, 1st Block, 100 Feet Road, HRBR Layout, Kalyan Nagar, Bengaluru – 560043, Mobile: 09986301252
Bangalore Date: 27.06.2026

SOUTHERN RAILWAY

Chennai Division

Tender No. M-TRD-29-I-OT-25-26-26R3, 28R3 Dated: 22.06.2026
Tender No. M-TRD-29-I-OT-2026-27-03R, 6R2 Dated: 22.06.2026

For and on behalf of the President of India, the Divisional Railway Manager / Traction Distribution Branch, Chennai Division, Southern Railway, Chennai - 3, invites online tender from the experienced Contractors for the following works. For further details, please refer to **www.ireps.gov.in**

Sl. No.	Tender No. / Name of the Works	Value (₹)	Closing Date / Time
1	**Tender No. M-TRD-29-I-OT-25-26-26R3** Modification to existing OHE arrangements in connection with Provision of up loop line at Kettandapatti (KDY) in AJJ - JTJ section of Chennai Division.	8598670.30	13.07.2026 at 15.00 hrs
2	**Tender No. M-TRD-29-I-OT-25-26-28R3** Replacement of existing 65 sq.mm weak catenary wire in MAS-RU and AJJ - JTJ section of Chennai Division.	23014130.00	13.07.2026 at 15.00 hrs
3	**Tender No. M-TRD-29-I-OT-2026-27-03R** Modification to existing OHE arrangements in connection with Provision of FOB under Amrit Bharat station Scheme in Chennai Division	7029612.62	13.07.2026 at 15.00 hrs
4	**Tender No. M-TRD-29-I-OT-2026-27-6R2** Improvements to existing OHE by elimination of silver brazed / codal life completed contact wire on condition basis in non-suburban sections of Chennai Division	29438631.00	13.07.2026 at 15.00 hrs

Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer / Traction Distribution Branch, Chennai - 3

PUBLIC NOTICE

This notice is issued on behalf of my client **1.Sri.Shankrappa Hugar** S/o Nagappa Hugar, and **2.Smt.Sinchana Hugar** W/o Sri.Shankrappa Hugar to bring the notice of the general public that Original registered absolute sale deed bearing doc.No.BLN-1-19632/2006-07 of Book-I, Stored in CD No.BLND288, dated.28.06.2006, registered in the office of the sub-registrar Bangalore North Taluk, Bangalore is missing /lost/ misplaced in respect of schedule property.

If any person/s, firm, company, institution or organization has any claim are holding the afore mentioned document or schedule property, they may contact the undersigned in writing within **7 days** from the date of this notice failing which it will be presumed that there are no claims.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the immovable property bearing Eastern Portion of **Site No.32,** presently Bangalore Western City Corporation old PID No.2441847546, Assessment No.21/1, situated at **Karivobanahalli Village, Yeshwanthapura Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk, Bangalore Urban District,** now comes under the Limits of Bangalore Western City Corporation, new Ward No.40-Doddabidarakallu, Bangalore, measuring East to West : **15 feet** and North to South : **35 feet,** in all measuring **525 Sq.feet** and bounded on :

East by : Site No.31, West by : Remaining Western Portion of Same Site, North by : 25-0 feet Road, South by : Others Property.

H. Prahlada, Advocate & Solicitor,
For H.P.Law, #2, 3rd Floor, Venkateshwara Complex, Yeshwanthpur, Bangalore-560022
M : 7760061073

PUBLIC NOTICE

The General Public is hereby informed that Our Client Mr. Subramanya.V S/o Vaasudev who is residing at NO.837, Abhivrudhi nilaya, Vinayaka Layout, 12th Main Road, Nagarabhavi, Bangalore-72, is intend to Purchase the Schedule Properties from Sri.Narasimhaiah s/o Late.Puttarangaiah and Smt.Rathnamma.N W/o Krishnamurthy who are the residents of Buddayya-napalya village, Soluru Hobali, Nelamangala taluk, Bangalore Rural district.

Any Persons, Financial Institutions having any Sort of Claim/ Rights/ Interests on the Schedule Properties may file their Objections in Writing along with Supporting Documents, addressed to the Undersigned within 15 days from the date of Publication of this Notice. Failing which, it shall be Construed that there are no claims of any sort, over the schedule properties and Our Client Shall be advised to proceed with the transaction. Any Claims there after Shall not be entertained.

SCHEDULE PROPERTIES

1. The Agricultural Property bearing Survey No. 31/14, extent of 2-20-00 (two acre twenty guntas) of fine Dry land. And Kharab land 36 guntas Situated at Goruru village, Soluru Hobali, Nelamangala taluk, Bangalore Rural district. and Bounded as:-

East by: Ramaiah's Land. West by: Mahantaiah's Land.
North by: Shivagange Road & N.H. South by: Mahantaiah's Land.

2. The Agricultural Property bearing Survey No. 33/27, extent of 00-19-00 (Nineteen guntas) of fine Dry land. Situated at Goruru village, Soluru Hobali, Nelamangala taluk, Bangalore Rural district. and Bounded as:-

East by-Narasimhaiah's Land. West by-Mahantaiah's Land.
North by- Narasimhaiah's Land. South by-Mahantaiah's Land.

This Notice issued by, **Y.M.Suresh, Advocate,** G.S.Associates, OPP to Old Court Building, B.H.Road, Nelarnanagala town and taluk, Bangalore Rural District. Mob-9844469019 or E-mail-ygereymsuresh@gmail.com.

Date: 26.06.2026 Sd/-
Place: Bangalore Y.M. SURESH, Advocate KAR/2067/04
G.S. ASSOCIATES B.H. Road, Jaganath Building, Opp. Court, Nelamangala-562123.

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Client intends to purchase the below mentioned Schedule Property from **Mr. S. Radhakrishnaa** S/o Mr. Damodaram Sevvakula & his wife **Mrs. S.R. Sireesha**, residing at No. 19-6, Thanappachetty Street, near Prabha Grand INN, Mittoor, Chittoor, Andra Pradesh 517001. Any person/s who has/have any right, claim or interest in the said property or any part thereof may notify to the undersigned along with proof of such claims/objections to such sale within **15 days** from this day, failing which my client will proceed to purchase the schedule property assuming that there are no claims, right or interest whatsoever.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

Property bg. **Site No. 8**, (Old BBMP Katha No. 735/309/Site No. 8, 735, earlier Katha No. 309/8 & 477/8) formed in Con. Sy. No. 127 (converted for Non-Agricultural residential purpose vide Official memorandum bearing No. B.DIS.ALN ST (N) 155/1993-94 dt. 13-7-1994 by Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore Dist.) in the Layout known as **"PRESTIGE WHISTLING PALMS"** situated at Pattandur Agrahara Village, K.R. Pura Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk, now under the limits of GBA (Bangalore East City Corporation), E-Khatha PID No. 8573732177, measuring on the East: 41 ft, on the West: 71 ft, on the North 80: ft & on the South 85: ft, totally measuring 4480 sq. feet and & bounded on the :

East by: Road,
West by: Road,
North by: Site No. 7, Old Katha No. 477/7, 309/7 and
South by: Road.

Harsha C. Mensinakai
Advocate,
No. 126, 3rd E Cross, Kasturinagar, Blore-43, **Mobile: 98803 08930.**
harshamensinakai@gmail.com

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Antonelli hopes to bounce back after bump in the road

The Italian teen feels the Red Bull Ring in Austria will suit his Mercedes car better than the track in Barcelona; Russell warns his teammate that veteran Hamilton is back to his best

FORMULA ONE

Agence France-Presse
SPIELBERG

Healthy cushion: Antonelli holds a 41-point lead over second-placed Hamilton. AFP

Formula One leader Kimi Antonelli said that a Mercedes upgrade would help him bounce back from his first defeat of the season while teammate George Russell warned that Ferrari's Lewis Hamilton was back to his "beautiful best".

Russell was the favourite for the drivers' title until his teenage partner Antonelli went on a record run of five consecutive wins, a streak that Hamilton ended in Barcelona two weeks ago. It was Hamilton's first victory for the 'scarlet Scuderia' after two consecutive second-place finishes. The 41-year-old climbed to second in the title race and is 41 points behind Antonelli.

But the Italian is keen to get back on track at the Austrian GP, an event that was declared a "heat hazard" by the FIA with temperatures set to hit 38 degrees Celsius or higher across the race weekend. Sunday's race will be followed by the British, Belgian and Hungarian Grands Prix before the four-week summer break. "I think that these are tracks where our car should adapt well," Antonelli said.

"The Red Bull Ring should be more favourable than Barcelona was for us, even though we are expecting very high temperatures. It is a very demanding track for the car, especially since the altitude reduces the amount of available oxygen. Having a fresh power unit is definitely good news," added the 19-year-old.

His teammate Russell was full of praise for Hamilton. "Kimi is still very much the driver out in front and he is performing incredibly and consistently. But Ferrari feels like it is coming and Hamilton is at the forefront. It was great to see Hamilton back doing what he does best," Russell said of Hamilton's record-increasing 106th career win. "You do not forget how to drive overnight. But you need yourself, your team, the set-up, the understanding of the tyres – you need everything to click and when it does, you fly. That was the case with Hamilton, it was beautiful."

Serena's daughters witness mum gear up for Wimbledon comeback

TENNIS

Associated Press
LONDON

No dearth of support: Olympia, Adira and their dad Alexis Ohanian watch Serena and her doubles partner Mboko in action at the Queen's Club Championships. REUTERS

Serena Williams keeps on commenting half-jokingly about how "it's summer" and "the kids aren't in school" as the reasoning for her tennis comeback at age 44. Turns out family might really be the biggest factor behind Serena's decision to return to the pro game after nearly four years away.

Her two daughters, eight-year-old Olympia and Adira, who is almost three, have been with her every step of the way as she played two doubles warm-up matches before accepting wild card invitations to both the singles and doubles (with older sister Venus) competitions at Wimbledon, which starts on Monday.

"Just finished a mean game of duck duck goose," Serena said on X shortly after her singles wild card was announced last weekend.

A big hint about Serena's return came when she posted a video of a training session last month with Adira on court helping with a resistance band.

"Rumour has it...I got a new trainer," Serena said in her Instagram caption.

Christopher Eubanks, a recently retired pro turned Tennis Channel commentator, saw up close how Serena interacted with her family at her first tournament back at Queen's Club, where he performed an on-court interview with the American great and doubles partner Victoria Mboko.

"There's no changes to her legacy that will come as a result of this return. I don't see anyone changing their mind about where Serena stands all-time," Eubanks said on Thursday of the 23-time Grand Slam singles champion.

"This is about more than just records. At this point, it's more about family," said Eubanks.

When Serena last played in singles at the 2022 US Open, Olympia had just turned five and Adira wasn't even born yet.

"They will forever know (Serena) as, Oh, you know, mommy is the GOAT of tennis,'" Eubanks said.

Iron Mirage may score an encore in feature event

BENGALURU: Iron Mirage, who is in fine nick, may score an encore in the S.M. Cama Music and Production Pvt Ltd Juvenile Sprinters' Million (1,200m), the feature event of the races to be held here on Saturday (June 27).
False rails (width about 5m from 1,600m to the winning post) will be in position.

1 SMART CHIEFTAN PLATE (1,400m), maiden 3-y-o only, (Terms), 2.00 p.m.: 1. Rampage (1) Yash 56, 2. Shining Path (4) Akshay K 56, 3. Taaqath (7) S. Saqlain 56, 4. Xanthos (5) Darshan 56, 5. Ashwa New York (2) Suraj 54.5, 6. Bellucci (6) Arvind K 54.5 and 7. Sindoor (3) Antony 54.5.
1. RAMPAGE, 2. ASHWA NEW YORK

2 POONAWALLA STUD PLATE (Div. II), 1,200m, rated 40 to 65, 5-y-o & over, 2.30: 1. La Mcqueen (7) Aleemuddin 60, 2. Battle Lass (9) B. Nayak 56, 3. Defence Counsel (6) G. Vivek 56, 4. N R I Victory (2) Jagadeesh 55.5, 5. Win Win (4) Hindu S 55.5, 6. Bestidentification (3) A. Asbar 55, 7. Aherne (5) Antony 54.5, 8. Basilica (1) Akshay K 52.5 and 9. Lauterbrunnen (8) Kiran Rai 52.
1. BESTIDENTIFICATION, 2. DEFENCE COUNSEL, 3. BASILICA

3 ASTRONOMIC PLATE (2,000m), rated 40 to 65, 3.00: 1. Magnus (6) Neeraj 60, 2. Winfield (4) Antony 58, 3. Badshaah (7) Abdul Fazal 57.5, 4. Maana (1) Akshay K 55.5, 5. Youremanorborne(5) Sandesh 55.5, 6. Multi Success (2) Vishal Bunde 54.5, 7. Unforgettable Star (8) Yash 52.5 and 8. Storm Shadow (3) G. Vivek 51.5.
1. YOUREMANORBORNE, 2. MAANA, 3. UNFORGETTABLE STAR

4 MANAGING COMMITTEE GOLD CUP (1,600m), rated 80 & above, 3.30: 1. Victor Hugo (5) A. Hangal 62, 2. Touch Of Grey (6) Saurav Rawat 57, 3. Xanthe (2) Hindu S 55, 4. Emphatic (-) (-) 54.5, 5. Queen Of Kings (4) M. Prabhakaran 53.5, 6. Superstar (1) Yash 53 and 7. Promiseofthefuture (3) Neeraj 50.
1. XANTHE, 2. PROMISEOFTHEFUTURE

5 S.M. CAMA MUSIC AND PRODUCTION PVT LTD JUVENILE SPRINTERS' MILLION (1,200m), 3-y-o only, (Terms), 4.00: 1. Burevestnik (1) Sandesh 57, 2. Iron Mirage (5) Akshay K 57, 3. A Great Buzz (4) Pavan 55.5, 4. Shrishti (3) Yash 55.5 and 5. Veera's Princess (2) S. Shareef 55.5.
1. IRON MIRAGE, 2. A GREAT BUZZ

6 MALAKPET PLATE (1,300m), rated 20 to 45, 4.30: 1. Darrington (11) Pavan 60.5, 2. Coolie (5) B. Nayak 60, 3. Shining Ways (7) Suraj 59, 4. Lasya (3) Vishal Bunde 58, 5. Femme Fatale (6) Abdul Fazal 57.5, 6. Rocking Star (4) R. Pradeep 57, 7. Makoto (10) Vishal S 56, 8. Star Honour (9) Md. Talib 55.5, 9. Annabelle (1) Antony 53, 10. Big B (8) Kiran Rai 52.5 and 11. Power Of The Sea (2) S. Shareef 52.5.
1. SHINING WAYS, 2. DARRINGTON, 3. ROCKING STAR

7 POONAWALLA STUD PLATE (Div. I), 1,200m, rated 40 to 65, 5-y-o & over, 5.00: 1. Senor Cherie (1) Akshay K 62.5, 2. True Punch (9) Bhawani S 62, 3. Aquastic (8) S. Sachin 61.5, 4. Bezawada Sultan (2) Arul 61, 5. Royal Deccan (5) Antony 61, 6. Densetsu (7) Hindu S 57, 7. Kabali (6) R. Pradeep 55, 8. Stravinsky (4) Kiran Rai 55 and 9. Felisa (3) Arvind K 54.5.
1. SENOR CHERIE, 2. AQUASTIC, 3. ROYAL DECCAN

Day's best: IRON MIRAGE
Double: BESTIDENTIFICATION -SHINING WAY
Jkt: 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7; Mini Jkt: 4, 5, 6 and 7; Tr (i): 2, 3 and 4; (ii): 5, 6 and 7.

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

Gouthama FC in semifinals

Gouthama FC edged out Rovers FC 1-0 in the BDFA 'C' division league quarterfinal here on Friday.

The results (quarterfinals): Gouthama FC bt Rovers FC 1-0; Rangers FC bt Freedom FC 2-0.

Pavitra scalps six

Pavitra (six for 15) took Swastic Union Cricket Club (1) past Malleswaram Gymkhana by 164 Runs in the KSCA under-15 girls' T30 tournament here.

The scores: Swastic Union Cricket Club (1) 229/3 in 25 overs (Raksha Muthu 57, Kirti Ashtaputre 64, Aaradhya Mallik 60 n.o.) bt Malleswaram Gymkhana 65 in 14.4 overs (Pavitra 6/15). Whirlwind Cricketers 175/8 in 30 overs (Sanvi Gowda 87 n.o., P. Annika 4/23) bt Visweswarapuram Cricket Club (2) 147 in 26.5 overs (Mahira Rehan 49, B. Pearl Muthamma 40).

Bangalore Sports Club 163/7 in 30 overs (Kushi Suryakanth 112 n.o.) lost to Rajajinagar Cricketers 164/4 in 28.1 overs (D.R. Thanishka 42).

Mount Joy Cricket Club 70 in 20.3 overs (Nishit Nair 4/18) lost to City Gymkhana 71/3 in 15 overs.

Arsh smashes 191 for Modern CC, Pranav's unbeaten 165 in vain

Arsh smashed 191 as Modern Cricket Club crushed Yankees Cricket Club by 180 runs in the KSCA under-19 inter-club tournament here. G. Pranav's unbeaten 165 went in vain.

The scores: Sangam Cricket Association 196 in 45.3 overs (N. Dishanth 42, Syed Amin 50 n.o.) bt Johnson Cricket Club 128 in 29 overs (Aakrish Kumar 5/38). Hammonds Cricket Club 112 in 38 overs lost to Visweswarampuram Cricket Club (1) 113/1 in 21.5 overs (Sanjit Sathish 41). Engrades Cricket Club 142 in 35 overs lost to Spartons Sports Club 143/5 in 27.2 overs. Bangalore Occasionals 187 in 45 overs (Vrateen Prashant Padti 57, Vyshak Nagaraj 49, Bharath Venkatadri 40 n.o., Eashan Roy 4/42) bt National Cricketers 67 in 24.5 overs. Merchants Cricket Club (1) 131 in 28.5 overs (B.N. Karthik Shet 4/28) lost to Cavaliers Cricket Club 135/6 in 20.5 overs. Century Cricketers 289/7 in 50 overs (R. Uday Charan 110, Chilukuri Akhil Subhash 75, S.M. Hanshal 4/62) bt City Cricketers (2) 150 in 35.5 overs (U. Diganth 45, A.G. Gurucharan 4/25, Hariharan Ganesh Ramani 4/19). Viveknagar Cricketers 186 in 36.5 overs (M.M. Mokshagna 65, Y. Uday Gowda 5/31) bt Jolly Cricketers 90 in 20.5 overs.

Chintamani Sports Association, Chintamani 175 in 42 overs (Arjun Aravind Potti 61) lost to Neptune Cricket Club 176/7 in 39 overs (S. Ashrith Reddy 51, Satayiu Chakraborty 48 n.o.).

Modern Cricket Club 463/8 in 50 overs (Arsh 191, G. Vakula Chandra 70, Daniel James 55, Ivan Malhotra 76) bt Yankees Cricket Club 283/8 in 50 overs (G. Pranav 165 n.o., B.M. Chirag 56, M. Poornapragna Raam 5/46).

Mount Joy Cricket Club 245/5 in 50 overs (R. Amogh Shetty 46, Shahan Shadab 71, Syaamantak Anirudh 62) lost to Jawans Cricket Club 246/2 in 38.5 overs (Nitish Arya 114, Talha Sheriff 85 n.o.).

Swastic Union Cricket Club (1) 237/9 in 50 overs (R. Pavandeep Bharadakane 40, R.A. Sriee Krish 49, Suvik Gill 77 n.o.) bt Young Cricketers (1) 214 in 48.1 overs (Krishiv Bhatia 57, Karan Umesh 4/31).